

KOOTENAY ROCKIES

# DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2019-2029



WILSON CREEK FALLS  
Photo: Kari Medig



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FRONT COVER PHOTO: FERNIE, Kari Medig

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



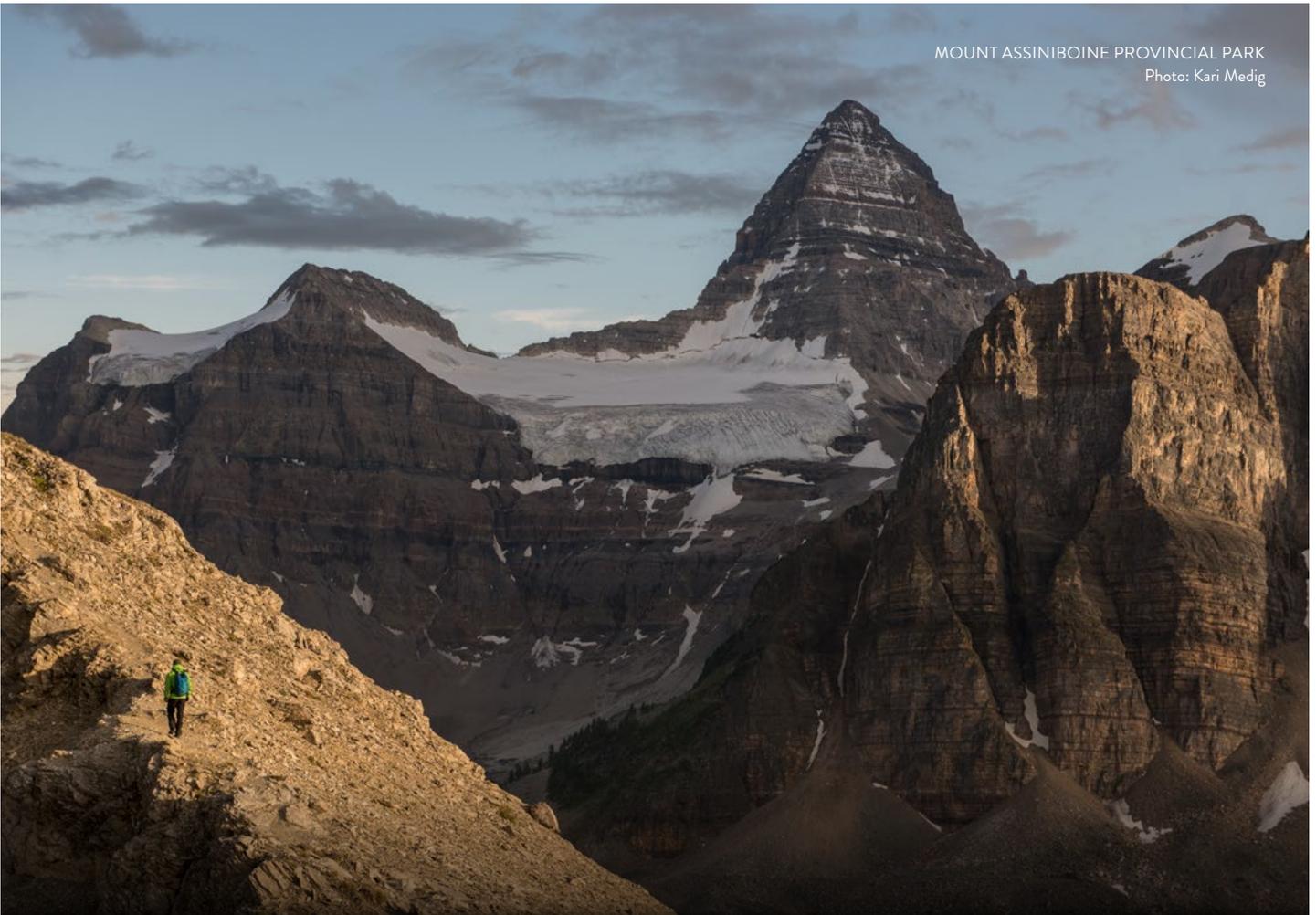
NAKUSP  
Photo: Dave Heath

This Destination Development Strategy (DDS) is the result of a two-year, iterative process of gathering, synthesizing, and validating information with partners and stakeholders about the current status, and future direction, of tourism in the Kootenay Rockies region.

As one of six regional destination development strategies that will be produced, the Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy will contribute to the tapestry of long-term planning area, regional, and provincial planning that will, in turn, support the development of British Columbia as a world-class tourism destination offering remarkable, authentic experiences that exceed expectations and align with the provincial brand.

The Kootenay Rockies DDS represents the integration of the four planning area strategies that lie within, or across, the Kootenay Rockies tourism region (West Kootenays & Revelstoke, Highway 3 Corridor, Columbia Valley, and Highway 1 Corridor) into one overarching regional strategy. The regional strategy elevates objectives and actions identified within planning areas strategies whose implementation would benefit from regional leadership and coordination.

The regional strategy can play an important role in helping to help advance the implementation of key priorities identified in the region's four planning area's destination development initiatives. The strategy, built off of a common planning framework, sets out a path for strong regional leadership, integration, and alignment to support destination success in and throughout the region and planning areas.



The goals, strategies, and actions within this plan have been prioritized to achieve the elements identified within the following vision for the Kootenay Rockies as a travel destination in ten years:

The Kootenay Rockies region is a world-class tourism destination that offers remarkable products and experiences that are authentic, driven by visitor demand, exceed expectations, and align with BC’s brand.

The Kootenay Rockies region is a preferred four-season destination for passionate travellers of all ages and abilities with a sense of adventure and a desire to discover unparalleled, accessible outdoor recreation and the authentic mountain culture unique to the Kootenay’s small towns. The Kootenay Rockies region offers travellers from near and far the opportunity to connect both to the nature that defines and sustains this place, and to the people that differentiate it with their outstanding service and warm welcome to visitors as “temporary locals”. The tourism industry in the Kootenay Rockies embraces collaboration, leads the world in sustainable tourism, and constantly builds and nurtures relationships that accelerate the region’s success as a travel destination.

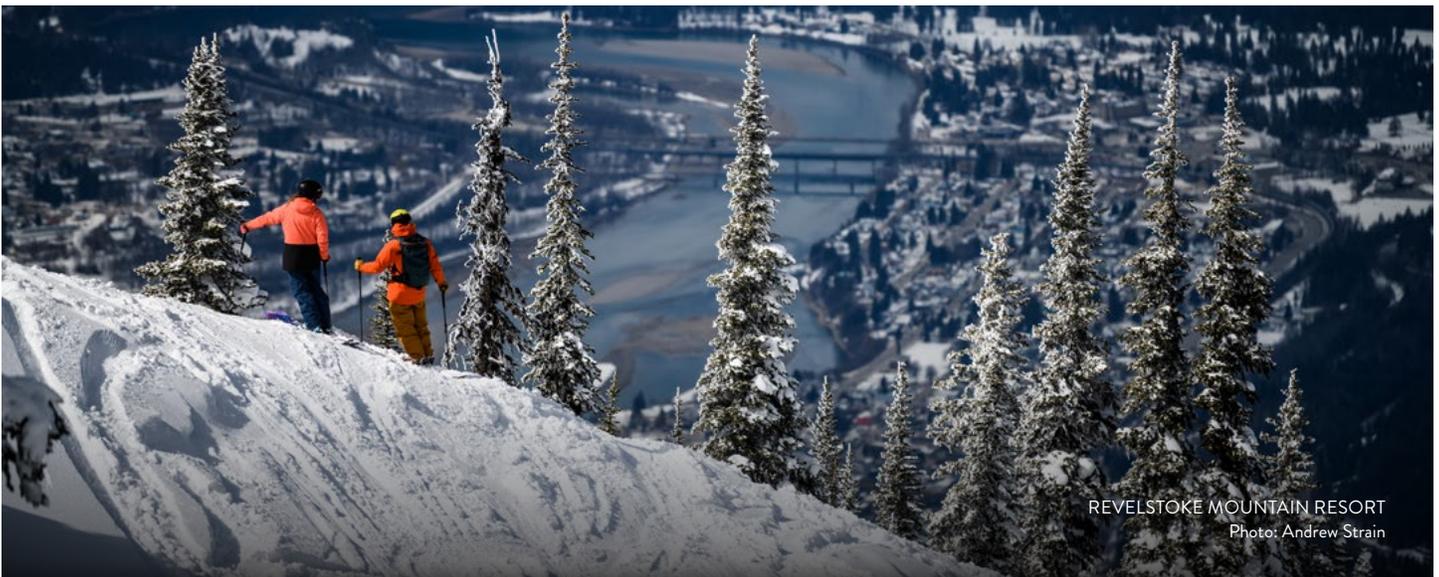
The following are the goals for regional destination development in the Kootenay Rockies:

1. Increase shoulder season visitation, and work towards a year-round tourism economy.
2. Increase average length of stay and average visitor yield in the region in each season.
3. Develop strategies to adapt to climate change and to reduce the contribution of the tourism industry to greenhouse gas emissions.
4. Improve resident recognition of tourism as a positive contributor to community resiliency and quality of life.
5. Improve tourism business ability to attract, retain, and house skilled staff and thereby enhance the climate for tourism business success.
6. Increase overall visitor destination satisfaction rating, as measured by a tool such as Net Promoter Score.
7. Become a leader in inter-modal transportation and rural connectivity.
8. Attract visitors to the region from more diverse markets so as to eventually increase the proportion of long-haul fly-in visitors.

Stakeholders further identified a set of guiding principles for destination development in the Kootenay Rockies region, such that implementation of this strategy should occur in a manner that:

- Contributes to environmental sustainability, and promotes stewardship by visitors and residents alike, relying on the precautionary principle whenever uncertainty exists.
- Respects all living things, Indigenous rights and titles, community values, and sense of place in each community.
- Retains authenticity and celebrates that which is local.
- Contributes to resident quality of life, and to overall community resiliency.
- Supports safe and reliable travel.
- Seeks to collaborate, innovate, and employ best practices.

To achieve progress towards this vision and achieve these goals, three overarching destination development strategy themes for the Kootenay Rockies region have been identified, containing specific objectives and actions, as well as the success networks determined for their implementation.



REVELSTOKE MOUNTAIN RESORT  
Photo: Andrew Strain

**IT'S IN OUR  
NATURE:  
OUR NATURE  
DEFINES US**

**MANY VOICES,  
ONE STORY:  
OUR PEOPLE  
DIFFERENTIATE US**

**STRONGER  
TOGETHER:  
OUR  
COLLABORATION  
ACCELERATES US**

Monitor  
and Respect  
Environmental  
Carrying  
Capacity

Build  
Strong  
Relationships  
with Indigenous  
Communities

Address  
Tourism  
Labour Shortages  
and Workforce  
Housing

Build  
Understanding  
of the Value of Tourism  
and Create Tourism  
Ambassadors

Monitor  
and Manage  
Experiential  
Carrying  
Capacity

Celebrate  
Community  
Authenticity  
and Respect  
Local Values

Invest  
in Training  
and  
Service

Develop  
a Supportive  
Tourism Business  
Climate

Continue  
to Offer Remarkable  
Outdoor Recreation  
Experiences

Contribute  
to Community  
Sustainability  
and Resiliency

Support  
Local Arts,  
Culture,  
Heritage

Deliver  
Safe, Reliable Access  
and Quality  
Infrastructure  
and Signage



In total, 37 objectives have been identified for implementation at the regional level by a wide range of stakeholders and success networks over the next 10 years. Nineteen of these objectives have been identified as catalysts to destination development in the Kootenay Rockies region.

These catalyst projects include both the “low hanging fruit” that will build momentum towards realizing the regional destination vision, as well as the more complex priorities that will ensure a strong foundation for successful destination development both now and well into the future.

**The purpose of this strategy is to not only provide underlying support for the goals of the provincial Destination Development Program, but also to:**

- Provide strategic direction for the region, and guidance for regional planning.
- Enhance the Kootenay Rockies’ ability to leverage resources and programs.
- Foster joint action and regional dialogue.

The Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy is intended to serve as a guide for tourism partners as they proceed with short, mid, and long-term development efforts.

This document should be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect changing tourism objectives, priorities, and market conditions. Results should be tracked regularly to ensure lessons learned help improve future implementation activities be even more effective in increasing economic, social, and cultural benefits throughout the region.

## ACRONYMS

CBT	Columbia Basin Trust
CF	Community Futures
DBC	Destination British Columbia
DC	Destination Canada
DDP	Destination Development Program
DMO	Destination Marketing Organization
EDO	Economic Development Offices
EMBC	Emergency Management BC
go2HR	The British Columbia Human Resource Organization for tourism
ITAC	Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada
ITBC	Indigenous Tourism Association of British Columbia
KRT	Kootenay Rockies Tourism
MRDT	Municipal and Regional District Tax (commonly referred to as the “Hotel Tax”)
SIDIT	Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust
RD	Regional District
RDMO	Regional Destination Marketing Organization
THRC	Tourism HR Canada
TIABC	Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia
TIAC	Tourism Industry Association of Canada
UNWTO	UN World Tourism Organization

## PROVINCIAL MINISTRIES

AEST	Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
AGRI	Ministry of Agriculture
CITZ	Ministry of Citizen Services
EDUC	Ministry of Education
EMPR	Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources
ENV	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
FIN	Ministry of Finance
FLNR	Ministry of Forest, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
IRR	Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
JTT	Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology
LBR	Ministry of Labour
MAH	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
PSSG	Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General
TAC	Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture
TRAN	Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

## FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS/ENTITIES

DFO	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
INAC	Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
WD	Western Economic Diversification Canada

# 1. FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## 1.1 FOREWORD

This Regional Destination Development Strategy is the result of a two-year, iterative process of gathering, synthesizing, and validating information with partners and stakeholders about the current status and future direction of tourism in the Kootenay Rockies region.

As one of six regional destination development strategies that will be produced, the Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy will contribute to the tapestry of long-term planning area, regional, and provincial planning that will, in turn, support the development of British Columbia as a world-class tourism destination offering remarkable, authentic experiences that exceed expectations and align with the provincial brand.

## 1.2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Destination British Columbia (DBC) and the project facilitation team thank the many private sector, First Nations, public sector, and not-for-profit tourism partners who contributed throughout the process by supporting the numerous community meetings, surveys, stakeholder interviews and follow-up conversations, and by providing relevant documents that informed all reports and strategies.

We thank the Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs on whose traditional territories we travelled and gathered for our community meetings. We acknowledge that many significant agreements have been realized in this tourism region resulting from successful cooperation between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, the private sector, governments, not-for-profit organizations, and passionate volunteers.



KOOTENAY ROCKIES  
Photo: Ryan Creary

HALCYON HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE AND SPA  
Photo: Dave Heath



SPECIAL THANKS ARE OFFERED TO MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUPS FOR EACH OF THE PLANNING AREAS THAT INFORMED THE CREATION OF THIS REGIONAL DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AS WELL AS THE KOOTENAY ROCKIES DESTINATION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WHO PROVIDED GUIDANCE AND INSIGHT INTO THE KOOTENAY ROCKIES DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.

Additionally, special thanks are offered to the facilitator of the Kootenay Rockies Destination Development process: Suzanne Denbak, Cadence Strategies.

BAILLIE-GROHMAN ESTATE WINERY  
Photo: Dave Heath



# 2. INTRODUCING THE STRATEGY



RETALLACK, SELKIRK MOUNTAINS  
Photo: Dave Heath

The Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy (DDS) has been developed to enhance the competitiveness of the Kootenay Rockies over the next 10 years and beyond. The strategy was developed as part of Destination BC's Destination Development Program.

The program is a critical component of Destination BC's corporate strategy, and facilitates the collaboration of local, regional and provincial agencies, Indigenous communities, entrepreneurs, destination marketing and management organizations, tourism operators, and other community interests to guide the long-term growth of tourism.

The Kootenay Rockies DDS represents the integration of the four planning area strategies that lie within, or across, the Kootenay Rockies tourism region (West Kootenays & Revelstoke, Highway 3 Corridor, Columbia Valley, and Highway 1 Corridor) into one overarching regional strategy. The regional strategy elevates objectives and actions identified within planning areas strategies whose implementation would benefit from regional leadership and coordination.

**FIGURE 1: Tourism Revenue Drivers**



## A FOCUS ON THE SUPPLY AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Destination development is the mechanism whereby the natural life cycle of tourism (e.g., development, stagnation, decline, and rejuvenation) is managed to ensure a destination evolves to remain “desirable” for the ever-changing consumer and hence, competitive in its target markets. Destination development happens when industry and government plan and work together to enhance the quality of the visitor’s experience by ensuring tourism products, services, amenities, and practices meet and exceed visitor expectations over the long term.

Tourism has two primary revenue drivers — supply and demand (Figure 1). Destination development focuses on the supply side of tourism by creating a compelling visitor experience to attract new visitors and entice repeat visitation. Arguably, in this age of near instantaneous sharing of experiences via social networks and third-party platforms which allow travellers to review and share their experiences, the quality of the destination and the experiences it offers is now an essential element of the marketing toolbox.

There are multiple dimensions to supply that are considered in destination development planning to enhance the visitor experience: the setting in which experiences take place and how to access them; policies that establish and maintain opportunities and growth barriers; the investment enhancement framework; products and experiences matched to consumer interests, including infrastructure and amenities (which are all often public in nature and used by residents as well as visitors); visitor servicing programs that meet and exceed guest expectations; and the capability, skills, and training required by the tourism industry to excel in their field.

## PROGRAM VISION AND GOALS

**On a provincial level, the Destination Development Program strives to accomplish the following vision:**

- BC is a world-class tourism destination that offers remarkable products and experiences that are authentic, driven by visitor demand, exceed expectations, and align with BC’s brand.

**The above vision is supported by three provincial goals:**

- Make BC the most highly recommended destination in North America.
- Create 10-year strategies for tourism development and improve return-on-investment for government and private sector investments in tourism assets.
- Elevate BC’s ability to compete as a premium destination while making the province more attractive for investment.

## Destination development brings together planning, policy, and capacity building efforts to:

- Ensure that a destination is well positioned to make future strategic decisions.
- Address impediments to growth and capitalize on opportunities.
- Outline key assets of a destination including the main product themes/ experiences available.
- Outline key priorities for new product, infrastructure and amenity development.
- Identify impediments to development and tourism growth (e.g., potential policy or capacity issues, available funding, access to funding etc.).

## PURPOSE

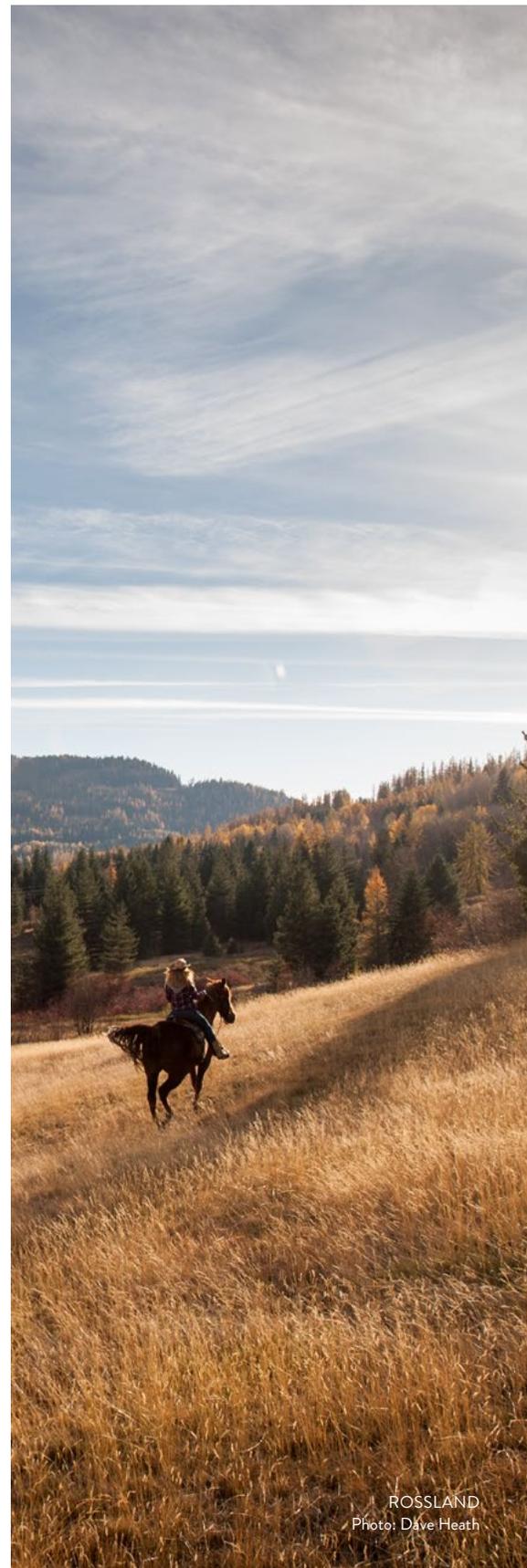
The Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy is intended to serve as a guide for tourism partners as they proceed with short, mid, and long-term development efforts. The strategy should be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect changing tourism objectives, priorities, and market conditions. Results should be tracked regularly to ensure learnings help future implementation activities be even more effective in increasing tourism's economic, social, and cultural benefits to the entire region.

The Kootenay Rockies DDS integrates the four planning area strategies within the tourism region (West Kootenays & Revelstoke, Highway 3 Corridor, Columbia Valley, Highway 1 Corridor) into one overarching regional strategy. The regional strategy elevates the objectives and actions identified within the planning areas strategies whose implementation would benefit from regional leadership and coordination.

The regional strategy can play an important role in helping to help advance the implementation of key priorities included in the four planning area destination development strategies within the region. The strategy, built off a common planning framework, sets out a path for strong regional leadership, integration, and alignment to support destination success in and throughout the region and planning areas.



ROSSLAND  
Photo: Kari Medig



ROSSLAND  
Photo: Dave Heath



## METHODOLOGY

Great strategies take time. The Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy is the result of an extensive, multi-phased planning process that included significant ground work and engagement to first develop planning area strategies for the four planning areas that lie within, or across, the Kootenay Rockies region. These areas are: the West Kootenays & Revelstoke, the Highway 3 Corridor, the Columbia Valley, and the Highway 1 Corridor. Further industry engagement and prioritization, as well as thoughtful consideration, led to the creation of this integrated regional strategy that represents the regionally-focused aspirations and priorities for tourism development in the Kootenay Rockies.

### This strategy was developed and informed by

- The Destination Development Strategies for the four planning areas that lie within, or cross through, the Kootenay Rockies: the Columbia Valley, Highway 1 Corridor, Highway 3 Corridor, and West Kootenays & Revelstoke. These strategies were developed over a 24-month period through an extensive collaborative planning and review process.
- Guidance and input from members of the Kootenay Rockies Destination Management Committee and the Kootenay Rockies Tourism team.
- Stakeholder input received during a 90-minute interactive workshop held at the Kootenay Rockies Annual Conference held in Cranbrook on October 16th, 2018.
- An online survey sent out to a database of over 800 tourism stakeholders in the Kootenay Rockies region to further refine and validate the regional vision, goals, and priorities.

## ALIGNMENT

The Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy is one of six regional destination development strategies that will be prepared for the province as a whole.

Through Destination BC's Destination Development Program, 20 sub-regional planning areas, across the province, have been defined and mapped out. These 10-year destination development strategies funnel into six regional strategies, one being the Kootenay Rockies Strategy, which will ultimately guide one master provincial destination development strategy for British Columbia.

Four planning areas are located within or across the Kootenay Rockies. The four planning areas are the West Kootenays & Revelstoke, the Highway 3 Corridor, the Columbia Valley and the Highway 1 Corridor. Together with the strategies that were developed for the remaining planning areas across the province, the regional destination development strategies will inform a Provincial Destination Development Strategy.

THE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES THEMSELVES WILL BE INFLUENCED BY, AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, REFLECT AND COMPLEMENT OTHER PLANNING INITIATIVES.

# 3. KOOTENAY ROCKIES OVERVIEW



BURGESS MOUNTAIN PASS  
Photo: Destination BC

The Kootenay Rockies tourism region lies in the southeast of the province, with the Canadian Rockies and the Alberta border as its eastern limit, and the Columbia Mountains on the west. It includes many freshwater lakes, rivers, and streams, including the Columbia River and its many tributaries.

It has a wealth of provincial parks (including Mount Assiniboine, the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy, Goat Range, and Kokanee Glacier), as well as four national parks (Mount Revelstoke, Glacier, Yoho, and Kootenay National Parks). The Columbia Wetlands is a RAMSAR designated wetland of international significance. The region features eight destination ski resorts, and five developed hot springs resorts, as well as several natural hot springs situated in rustic settings.

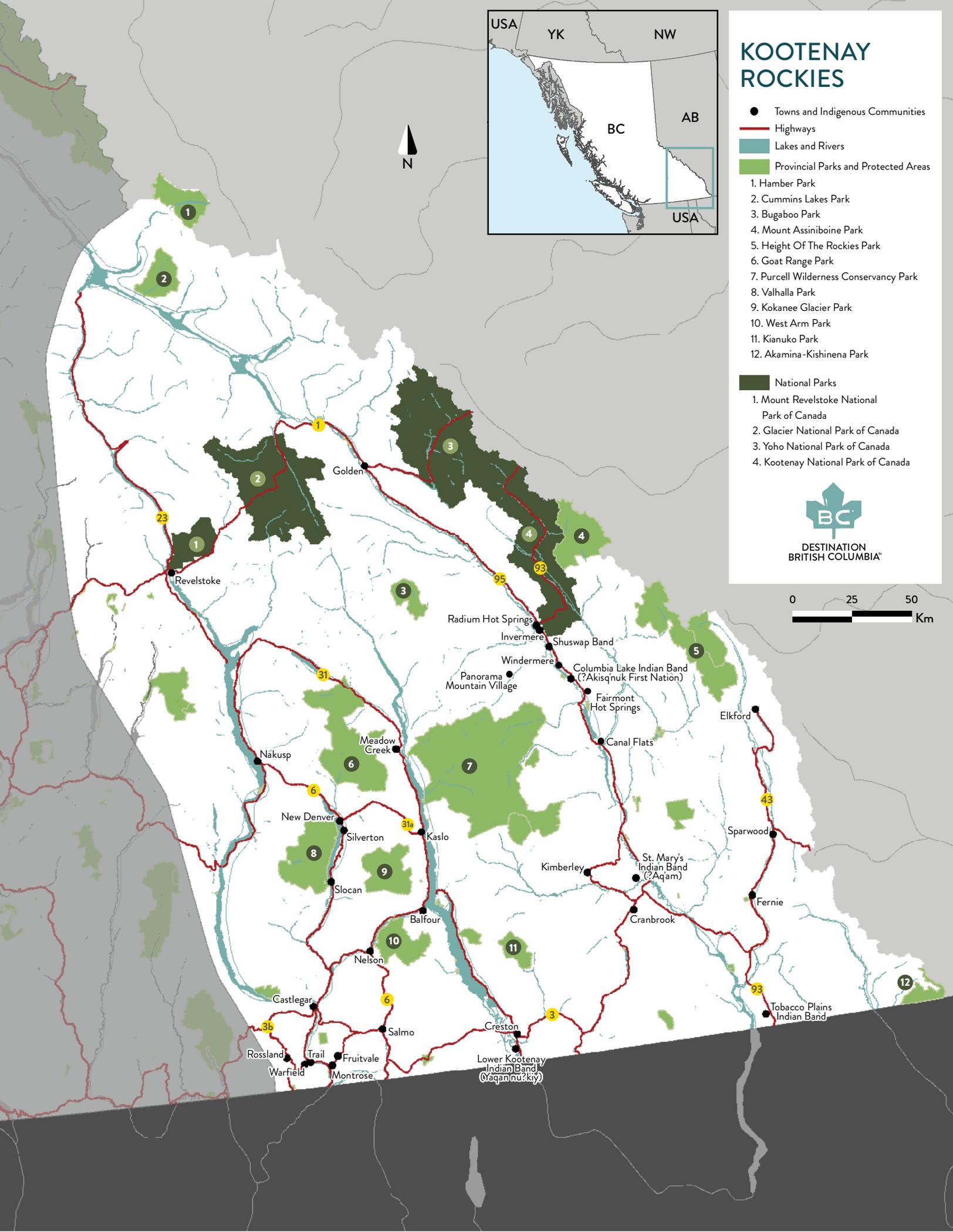
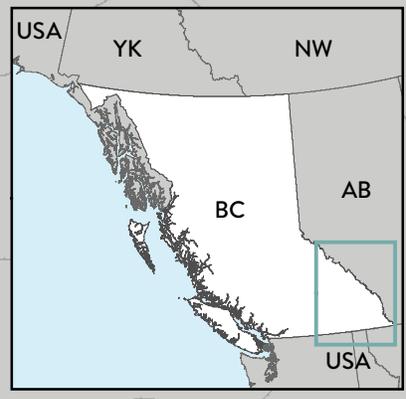
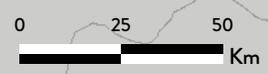
The following map identifies the larger communities in the region, and also depicts the high density of national and provincial parks, and bodies of water available that, in addition to the mountain topography, are foundational to many of the region's better-known visitor experiences.

# KOOTENAY ROCKIES

- Towns and Indigenous Communities
- Highways
- Lakes and Rivers
- Provincial Parks and Protected Areas

1. Hamber Park
2. Cummins Lakes Park
3. Bugaboo Park
4. Mount Assiniboine Park
5. Height Of The Rockies Park
6. Goat Range Park
7. Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Park
8. Valhalla Park
9. Kokanee Glacier Park
10. West Arm Park
11. Kianuko Park
12. Akamina-Kishinena Park

- National Parks
1. Mount Revelstoke National Park of Canada
  2. Glacier National Park of Canada
  3. Yoho National Park of Canada
  4. Kootenay National Park of Canada





MARYSVILLE  
Photo: Kari Medig

The Kootenay Rockies region is within the shared Traditional Territories of the Ktunaxa Nation, the Sinixt Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples.

The closest major urban area is Calgary, Alberta, with the BC border approximately a two hour drive away. There are two major east-west highways through the region – the TransCanada Highway 1 in the north, and the Crowsnest Highway 3 in the south. North-south connections run through the Columbia Valley at Golden (Highway 95) and through the Arrow Lakes/Slocan Valley at Revelstoke (Highway 23). Visitors can also access the region by air through the West Kootenay Regional Airport in Castlegar, the Canadian Rockies International Airport in Cranbrook, and local airports in Trail, Fairmont Hot Springs, and Revelstoke which have regular or seasonal and charter flights. There are no international flights available into the region, and international travellers must currently fly through Calgary or Vancouver.

### 3.1 MARKETS AND VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

Like other regions of BC, the Kootenay Rockies region has seen consistent annual growth in visitation. The region is relatively more dependent on the Alberta market than other parts of the province, and while this leaves it more vulnerable to declines in consumer spending arising from fluctuations in the health of the oil industry, it also creates an opportunity for “staycation” travel by this market. More than three-quarters of all visitation, and two-thirds of all spending, can be attributed to Alberta and BC residents.<sup>1</sup> Stakeholders report that the region also experiences significant European visitation, predominantly in summer, as part of multi-week tours of western Canada.

#### Specifically, key markets for the Kootenay Rockies region include:

- Alberta Residents – particularly Calgary
- BC Residents – particularly the Okanagan
- Other Canada – particularly Saskatchewan
- Washington State
- Europe (especially Germany) and the UK – summer touring market (leveraging the Canadian Rockies and the national parks) as well as winter ski and snowboard travellers
- Australia – winter ski and snowboard



INVERMERE  
Photo: BC Ale Trail

## PRODUCT MARKET MATCH

The table below identifies the current product and experience offerings in the Kootenay Rockies region and the market match.

PRODUCTS/ EXPERIENCES	ALBERTA	LOWER MAINLAND	REST OF BC	INTERNATIONAL	COMMENTS
TOURING/ EXPLORING	X	X	X	X	International: Australia, Germany, UK
HIKING	X	X	X	X	Growth Market
ROCK CLIMBING	X	X	X		Potential
SKIING/ SNOWBOARDING	X	X	X	X	Growth Market
SNOWMOBILING	X		X		Growth Market
MOUNTAIN BIKING	X	X	X	X	Growth Market
ROAD CYCLING	X	X	X	X	Growth Market
MOTORCYCLE TOURING	X	X	X		
LAKES/RIVERS	X	X	X		Family market
INDIGENOUS CULTURE	X	X	X	X	Potential. International: Germany, UK
DESTINATION FESTIVALS – ARTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE	X	X	X		Growth Market
CAMPING	X	X	X	X	Growth Market
HOT SPRINGS, SPA, HEALTH AND WELLNESS	X	X	X	X	Growth Market
WINTER EXPERIENCES – SNOWSHOE, NORDIC	X		X		
CULINARY/ AGRITOURISM	X	X	X		Potential
GOLF	X	X	X		Maintenance

Within the Kootenay Rockies region, some destinations have established and/or are growing their market equity for particular activities beyond the regional norm. For example, Revelstoke is increasingly known for its world-class snowmobiling experiences; Rossland, Fernie, Golden, and Revelstoke dominate in mountain biking, and other communities are quickly building up their mountain biking product; the Columbia Valley is renowned for its golf experiences and its concentration of hot springs; Nelson and Invermere lead in the arts, culture, and heritage market segments. Golden has positioned itself as the “Heart of the Parks”; the base from which to explore the national parks that surround it. The Creston Valley is leveraging its agriculture and wine-making to differentiate itself from other high-adrenaline destinations. The Slocan Valley and Nakusp area is renowned for its backcountry access and lake-based activities.

There are 18 visitor centres located within Kootenay Rockies communities that report information including visitor area of origin and length of stay. A review of these reports confirms that the Kootenay Rockies region is heavily dependent upon Alberta and BC resident markets for the majority of its visitation. The dominance of the Alberta market increases moving eastward in the region and hence closer to the Alberta border and major urban centres such as Calgary. There is also significant European visitation reported throughout the region, with representation from this market most notable along the Highway 1 Corridor. European visitation is also noticeable in the region’s national parks, as evidenced by the national park’s visitor data. Visitor’s length of stay in most communities is relatively short (day or one night only), particularly

during the summer touring months. Longer stays are reported in winter resort destinations. Clearly, the implication for destination development is to invest in the destination in a manner that encourages longer lengths of stay in the summer, and creates motivation to travel in shoulder seasons.

### 3.2 PSYCHOGRAPHIC – MARKET SEGMENTATION

Rather than marketing to, or developing products for travellers based on traditional segments, such as demographics (e.g., age, gender, income) or geography, Explorer Quotient (EQ) emphasizes the importance of traveller segmentation based on their psychological characteristics, such as their attitudes, beliefs, values, motivations, and behaviours. When various psychological characteristics are combined, different types of travellers emerge.

Destination BC activity targets three of the 12 North American EQ segmentation types – Authentic Experiencers, Cultural Explorers, and Free Spirits. For the Kootenay Rockies, the EQ type Gentle Explorer is also relevant, as they are frequent travellers that return to past destinations, and enjoy the security of familiar surroundings.

Further, people are motivated to travel by their passions and interests, and research has shown that focusing on passions can create a higher potential for creating active consideration for BC and drive visitation to a destination. Currently, the following interest groups and passions are identified:

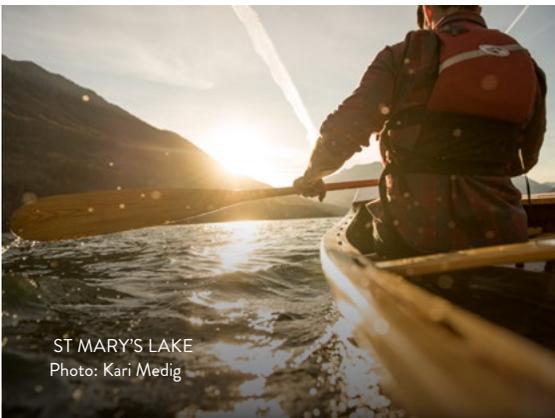
SKIING/ SNOWBOARDING	MOUNTAINS/ PARKS/ HIKING	LAKE/RIVER BASED PADDLING, BOATING	HOT SPRINGS/ HEALTH/WELLNESS	GOLF
HELI/CATSKIING	GETAWAYS TO DISCONNECT	FESTIVALS AND EVENTS	BACKCOUNTRY IMMERSION	CAMPING
FAMILY VACATIONS	MOUNTAIN BIKING/ CYCLING	ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE	SNOWMOBILING	AGRI-TOURISM/ CULINARY



### 3.3 UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITIONS AND KEY DESTINATION DIFFERENTIATORS

The unique selling proposition and key destination differentiators of the Kootenay Rockies region include:

1. Big mountain adventure and deep powder snow; readily accessible at a range of world-class destination ski resorts, via an unparalleled concentration of heli and cat ski operations, from a wealth of backcountry lodges, and independently via accessible backcountry routes.
  - a. The snow is deep, dry and reliable
  - b. Resort experiences combine with authentic towns
  - c. The extensive backcountry terrain and high quality powder is easily available through self-guided access, or with one of many cat ski and heli ski operators
  - d. A depth and density of winter activities to complement the ski product
2. Incredible scenic beauty accessible from the window of a car, or from deep into the backcountry – whichever option the traveller prefers, with relatively easy access to nature, and outdoor adventure that surrounds, inspires, and defines each moment spent here.
  - a. Sheer number of mountain ranges and valley systems including the Canadian Rockies, national and provincial parks, the Columbia Wetlands, and the accompanying scenic beauty, camping, and relaxation opportunities these systems provide
  - b. A growing number of world class trail experiences for hiking, mountain biking, trail running, and various mechanized activities
  - c. A wealth of freshwater lakes and rivers, along with a wide range of paddling, whitewater, and float experiences, as well as exceptional angling
3. A series of developed and rustic hot springs experiences along an interesting touring route, offering visitors a complete range of full-service resort, spa, and wellness services through to natural ponds and camping opportunities.
4. Clusters of exceptional destination golf courses, as well as more value-oriented golf courses, offering a strong combined value proposition and enjoyable touring routes.



ST MARY'S LAKE  
Photo: Kari Medig

5. The quirkiness, small town friendliness, and the many people that call Kootenay communities “home” serve as a backdrop for authentic stories, both old and new.

6. A “sense of place” that encompasses both an abiding zen-like calm and sense of peacefulness, yet also exudes a sense of discovery, innovation, and search for adventure. There is a commitment to the environment, and to healthy living, manifested in fresh organic produce, locally-sourced restaurant menus, and a propensity to find joy in physical activity and in artistic expression.

#### 7. Arts, Culture, and Heritage

- a. A wealth of artists and artisans handcrafting and sharing their works
- b. An intriguing history and heritage that embraces cultural diversity
- c. A growing number of Indigenous cultural experiences
- d. Festivals and events celebrating a range of interests all year long

- **ANGLING** high quality angling experiences are available throughout the region with destinations such as the Elk River (Fernie), the Columbia River (Columbia Valley), and the Kootenay River (Castlegar) already benefiting from international awareness.
- **KOOTENAY DIRT** Mountain biking and trail-based experiences throughout the region.
- **ROAD CYCLING** Road cycling experiences on designated routes throughout the region that offer incredible mountain vistas.
- **TOURING THE HIGHWAY 3 CORRIDOR** The appeal of a relaxed and scenic drive with multiple places to stop enroute, featuring the uniqueness of each community along the corridor, incredible scenic beauty, healthy ecosystems, easy access to outdoor adventure, and a growing inventory of trail-based infrastructures.
- **TOURING THE HIGHWAY 1 CORRIDOR** One of the most highly desired road trips to experience in North America, as well as an efficient route to a specific destination.
- **WEDDINGS** The Kootenay region is a frequent choice for destination weddings, offering wedding parties outstanding venues and services against a stunning backdrop of mountains, lakes, and rivers.

### 3.4 CORE DEMAND GENERATORS

Specific experiences that have potential as iconic products and experiences for regional growth to develop a year-round destination and require a regional approach to development include:

- **THE POWDER HIGHWAY** the collection of world-class winter experiences offered throughout the region at destination ski resorts, backcountry lodges, on groomed trails, in high alpine bowls, and in the neighbouring towns.
- **HOT SPRINGS TOURING** the collection of developed and natural hot springs experiences and the associated health and wellness services and amenities on-site, or in neighbouring towns.
- **MOUNTAIN PARKS, CAMPING, AND HIKING** the collection of front and backcountry experiences allowing travellers of all ages and abilities to experience camping and nature (including accessible camping and hiking opportunities).

### 3.5 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

From a tourism destination perspective, the Kootenay Rockies benefits from a range of strengths. However, it is also facing a number of destination development challenges; some of which have the potential to impact the future growth and sustainability of the tourism sector. Strengths, challenges, and opportunities were identified within each planning area process in the Kootenay Rockies. These then informed the summary for the regional strategy.

In order to build on these strengths, and address these challenges, a number of key opportunities have been identified that form the foundation of the Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy. These key strengths, challenges, and opportunities are summarized below in no particular order.

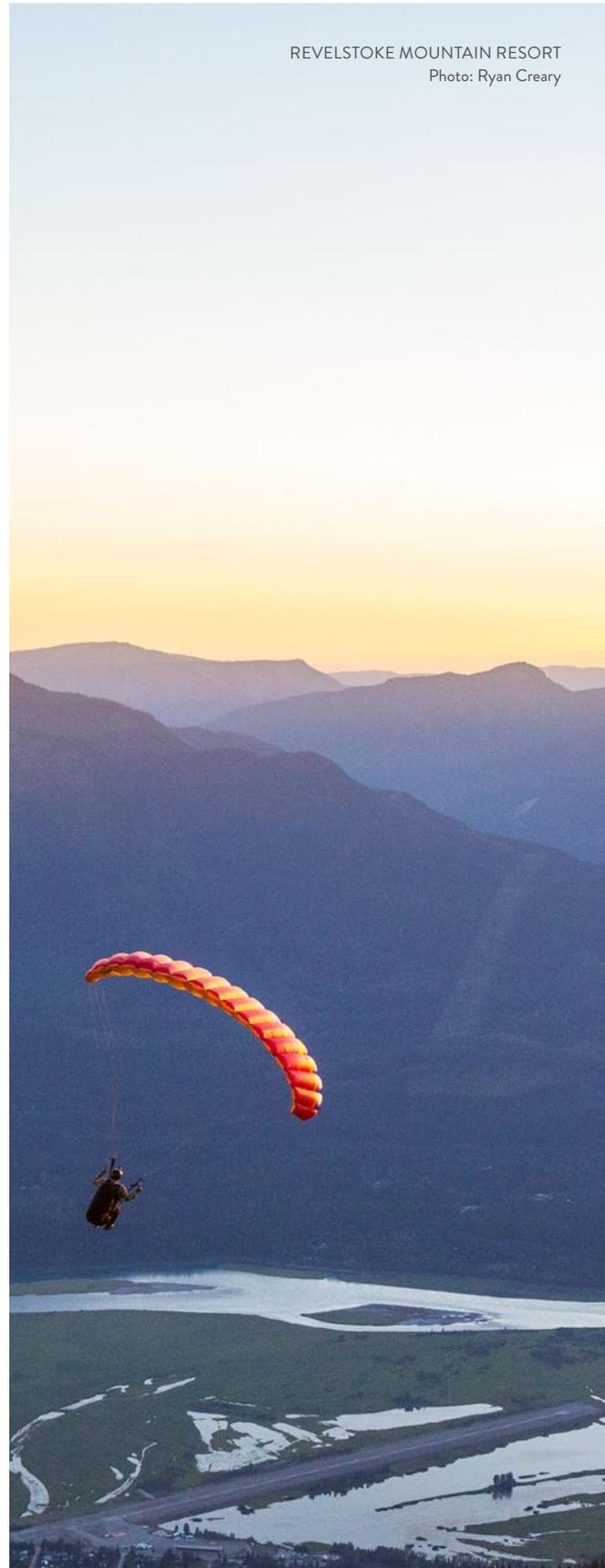
KEY STRENGTHS	KEY CHALLENGES	KEY OPPORTUNITIES
NATURAL ASSETS (CANADIAN ROCKIES, COLUMBIA WETLANDS, COLUMBIA MOUNTAIN RANGES, WARM LAKES, RIVERS)	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITY	DEVELOP IN A MANNER THAT RESPECTS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCY AND VALUES
DEVELOPED AND NATURAL HOT SPRINGS	ACTUAL AND PERCEIVED SAFETY AND EASE OF TRAVEL	IMPROVE ACTUAL AND PERCEIVED SAFETY AND EASE OF ACCESS TO AND WITHIN THE REGION
NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL PARKS	INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES AND AMENITIES TO SUPPORT TRAVEL QUALITY (REST STOPS, SIGNAGE, ETC.)	BUILD STRONG, COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS THROUGHOUT THE REGION
ESTABLISHED DESTINATIONS WITH OWN BRAND EQUITY	YEAR-ROUND STAFF CONSTRAINTS, INCLUDING SKILLSETS, AFFORDABLE HOUSING	IMPROVE QUALITY OF VISITOR INFRASTRUCTURE
HIGH QUALITY TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE E.G. TRAIL SYSTEMS	CONFLICTS ON THE LAND AND WATER BASE	IMPROVE BUSINESS CLIMATE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR TOURISM OPERATORS
GROWING DEPTH OF ARTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE, AND CULINARY EXPERIENCES	DEPENDENCY ON SUMMER SEASON AND LIMITED EXPERIENCES AND HOURS OF OPERATION OUTSIDE OF PEAK SEASONS	ENCOURAGE LAUNCH OF ADDITIONAL VISITOR EXPERIENCES IN SHOULDER SEASONS
QUAINT TOWNS WITH CHARACTER	LOCAL SUPPORT FOR TOURISM – LACK OF RESIDENTS AWARENESS	IMPROVE QUALITY AND CONSISTENCY OF SERVICE
AUTHENTIC MOUNTAIN TOWNS AND PASSIONATE RESIDENTS		RECRUITING, RETAINING, AND TRAINING STAFF INCLUDING PROVISION OF SUFFICIENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING
SOPHISTICATED TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS		IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY FOR SENIORS, YOUNG FAMILIES, AND PEOPLE WITH ACCESS REQUIREMENTS OR DISABILITIES

### 3.6 DESTINATION ASSESSMENT

The natural assets of the Kootenay Rockies region are stunning; beautiful mountain backdrops, crystal clear lakes, wetlands of international significance, and several mineral hot springs. This natural wealth is protected both through the national and provincial park designations, and by the passion and values of residents themselves for protecting and preserving their home.

While mining, forestry, transportation, and agriculture have long been important industries, tourism is increasingly being recognized by residents and local governments as an essential economic contributor. While the importance of tourism is growing, so too is the risk of severe weather events related to climate change, and there is a need for tourism businesses to adopt climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Over the years, the remarkable natural assets of the region have been enhanced by private and public sector investments in the development of resorts, golf courses, and other resident and visitor amenities like the extensive trail networks for hiking, mountain biking, and Nordic skiing. Real estate development has often accompanied amenity development, and many communities are popular second home destinations. These second homeowners are considered to be a mixed blessing by their permanent counterparts, as they contribute to the local economy when visiting, however, in combination with growth in the sharing economy, they have contributed to rising real estate prices, a shortage of rental accommodation, and growing concerns about housing affordability for permanent residents and for the increasingly elusive pool of employees needed to successfully operate a tourism business.





WHILE THE TOURISM SECTOR HAS BEEN GROWING, VISITATION THROUGHOUT THE REGION HAS STRONG SEASONALITY, CREATING A “BOOM AND BUST” CYCLE, IN WHICH RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OPERATORS BRACE FOR A FLOOD OF SUMMER VISITORS, AND FOR THOSE COMMUNITIES WITH A SKI RESORT, WINTER VISITORS AS WELL.

Outside of peak season(s), tourism operators struggle to remain financially viable, and many of the services and amenities that residents enjoy during peak seasons are closed once the season ends. There are opportunities and strong stakeholder interest to increase shoulder season visitation, as well as to increase mid-week stays and overall length of stay throughout the year. There is significant opportunity to fill capacity in the shoulder season and increase the utilization of existing infrastructure and assets. The region needs to overcome multiple hurdles in order to be a true four-season destination, including offering consistent business hours and service levels in existing operations year-round, and providing additional attractive year-round activities and services, including some weather-independent options, to support spring and autumn visitation.

Many communities throughout the region have invested in downtown renewal and beautification, and the region’s resort communities (Revelstoke, Golden, Radium Hot Springs, Invermere, Kimberley, Fernie, and Rossland) continue to execute their Resort Development Strategies, and have been able to make further investments in signage, public gathering places, trail development, festivals and events, and animation. However, between communities, and in more rural areas of regional districts, there is opportunity for beautification, improved signage and wayfinding, and increased traveller services and amenities.

While there is significant infrastructure throughout the region to support visitor experiences, there are some gaps as well. Infrastructure and experiences for entry-level enthusiasts, families, seniors, and those with disabilities have been identified as areas for improvement. Additional weather protected venues and performance spaces would support the desire for shoulder season visitation. A source of sustainable funding to support the countless dedicated volunteers that maintain trail networks, produce festivals and events, and contribute to the wealth of arts, culture, and heritage experiences for visitors is needed.



Access to the region is, by necessity, dominated by private vehicles, as there are limited public transit or shuttle options. For these travellers, both the perceived and actual safety of travel along Highway 1 is of paramount importance, as this is a key touring route and a feeder for the entire region. Improved road maintenance standards in winter, quicker avalanche and debris cleaning and road sweeping (and communication thereof) are desired, as are identified road cycling routes that incorporate either separate or wider shoulders for increased safety and quality of cycle touring.

Additional rest stops and lookouts, complete with washrooms, wi-fi, interpretive signage, and information about upcoming experiences, are considered important. Continuous cell coverage along major travel routes, along with wi-fi hotspots, are opportunities to improve the quality of the travel experience. These amenities would also inform travellers about upcoming communities and experiences and encourage visitation. While improving the travel experience for those in private vehicles is important, stakeholders are also keenly interested in developing a leading model of multi-modal transportation options within the region.

SEVERAL DESTINATIONS IN THE REGION RELY ON THE INLAND FERRY SYSTEM TO FEED VISITORS INTO THEIR COMMUNITIES, AND CONTINUED MONITORING OF SCHEDULE AND CAPACITY IS REQUIRED TO ENSURE THESE CONSTRAINTS DO NOT CAUSE BOTTLENECKS PREVENTING DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS FROM YIELDING RESULTS.



There is a desire to secure a more diverse mix of visitation to reduce reliance on regional traffic and the Alberta market. Air access through Cranbrook is considered by stakeholders to be very limited and expensive for travellers, representing both a current deterrent and a future opportunity for destination development. However, with the addition of a West Jet connection to the Calgary Airport from Cranbrook, giving visitors from across North America another option to reach the region, which could increase the volume of air travel and decrease airfare costs. Improvements at Trail Regional Airport, and planned investments increasing the reliability of the West Kootenay Regional Airport in Castlegar, should also enhance ease of access to the region for longer-haul travellers.

The Kootenay Rockies region, by virtue of its size and its mountainous topography, has a very distributed and somewhat un-cohesive tourism industry. Collaboration efforts have been improving in recent years, but stakeholders recognize that destination success both at the individual business level, and for the region as a whole, will require continued and enhanced collaboration by all. The key partners in the success network for destination development are as follows:

FEDERAL	PROVINCIAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL	INDIGENOUS	
DESTINATION CANADA	DESTINATION BC	KOOTENAY ROCKIES TOURISM	DMOs (NON-GOVERNMENT)	INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES	
WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION	GO2HR	REGIONAL DISTRICTS	LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURS	
PARKS CANADA	<b>MINISTRIES/ AGENCIES:</b> TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE  JOBS, TRADE AND TECHNOLOGY  TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT  INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION  ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY  AGRICULTURE  MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS & HOUSING	REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS	CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE	INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
CANADIAN HERITAGE		FUNDING ORGANIZATIONS AND TRUSTS	BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATIONS	INDIGENOUS TOURISM BC	
DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS		POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS	HOTEL ASSOCIATIONS	INDIGENOUS TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA	
PUBLIC SAFETY CANADA		BC RURAL NETWORK	COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS	BC ABORIGINAL NETWORK ON DISABILITY SOCIETY	
TRANSPORT CANADA		AIRPORTS	VISITOR CENTRES		
PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA		TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS	TOURISM OPERATORS		
FEDERAL ACCESSIBILITY LEGISLATION ALLIANCE LEADERSHIP TEAM			ARTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE ORGANIZATIONS		
SPINAL CORD INJURY		SPINAL CORD INJURY BC NETWORK PARTNERS		CLUBS AND VOLUNTEER GROUPS	
				SEARCH AND RESCUE	
			RESIDENTS		

# 4. A DISTINCTIVE DIRECTION



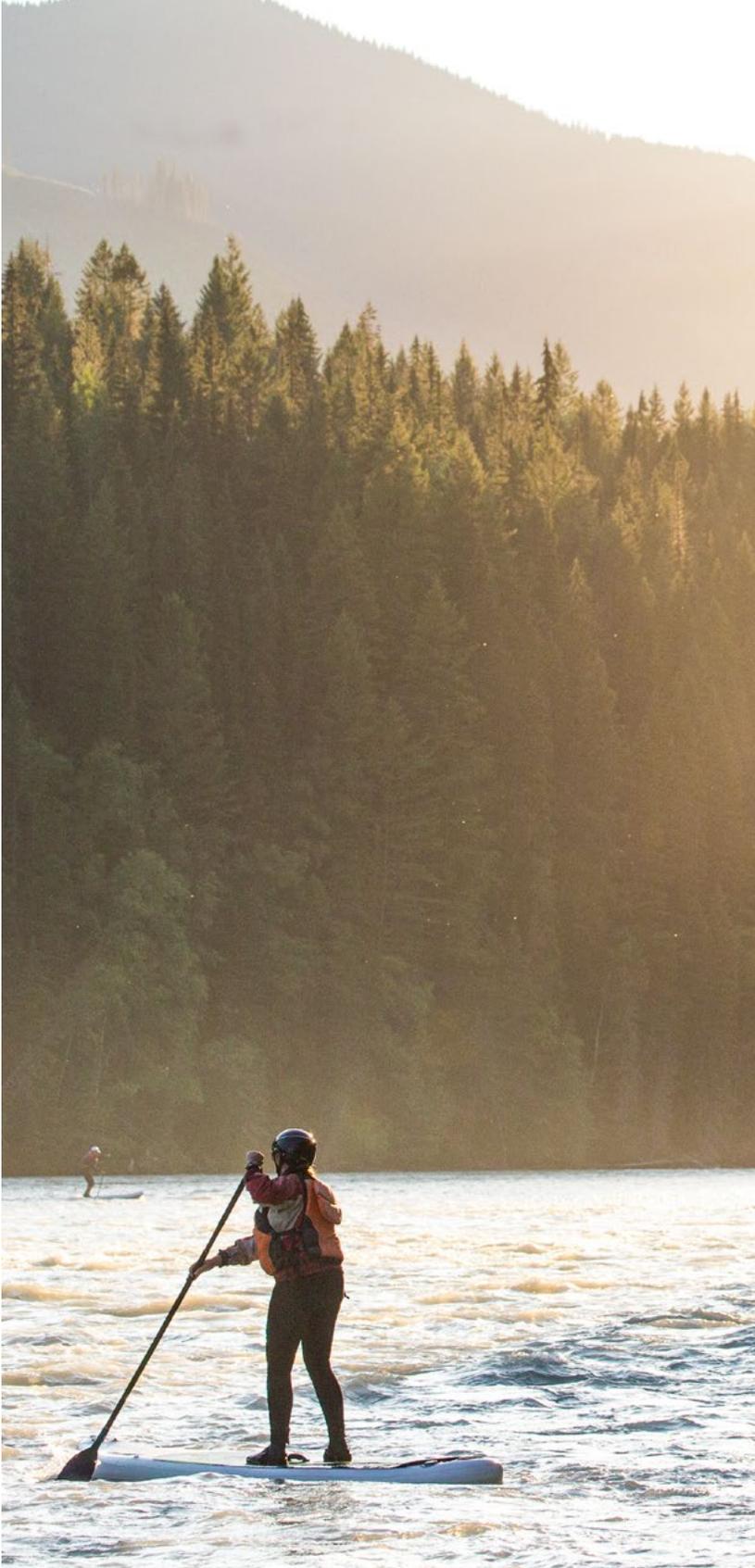
FERNIE  
Photo: Dave Heath

## VISION, GOALS, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, AND DEVELOPMENT THEMES

This Kootenay Rockies strategy directly supports the provincial vision for the Destination Development Program. The goals, strategies, and actions within this plan have been prioritized to achieve the elements identified within this vision.

The Kootenay Rockies region is a world-class tourism destination that offers remarkable products and experiences that are authentic, driven by visitor demand, exceed expectations, and align with BC's brand.

The Kootenay Rockies region is a preferred four-season destination for passionate travellers of all ages and abilities with a sense of adventure and a desire to discover unparalleled, accessible outdoor recreation, and the authentic mountain culture unique to the Kootenay's small towns. The Kootenay Rockies region offers travellers from near and far the opportunity to connect both to the nature that defines and sustains this place, and to the people that differentiate it with their outstanding service and a warm welcome to visitors as "temporary locals". The tourism industry in the Kootenay Rockies embraces collaboration, leads the world in sustainable tourism, and constantly builds and nurtures relationships that accelerate the region's success as a travel destination.



## 4.1 GOALS

The following are the goals for regional destination development in the Kootenay Rockies:

1. Increase shoulder season visitation, and work towards a year-round tourism economy.
2. Increase average length of stay and average visitor yield in the region in each season.
3. Develop strategies to adapt to climate change and to reduce the contribution of the tourism industry to greenhouse gas emissions.
4. Improve resident recognition of tourism as a positive contributor to community resiliency and quality of life.
5. Improve tourism business ability to attract, retain, and house skilled staff, and thereby enhance the climate for tourism business success.
6. Increase overall visitor destination satisfaction rating as measured by a tool such as Net Promoter Score.
7. Become a leader in inter-modal transportation and rural connectivity.
8. Attract visitors to the region from more diverse markets, so as to eventually increase the proportion of long-haul fly-in visitors.

In addition, the Destination BC Destination Development Program provides two common provincial goals that all six regional strategies and 20 planning areas will support:

1. Lead Canada in growth of overnight visitor expenditures.
2. Secure the highest Net Promoter Score in North America.

BUGABOO PROVINCIAL PARK  
Photo: Kari Medig



## 4.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

As the journey of destination development continues in the Kootenay Rockies, priorities will be set, and choices will need to be made to move the plan forward. The following guiding principles were consistently identified within the four planning areas that informed this strategy, and are considered to be applicable at the regional level.

**The pursuit of these destination development goals should occur in a manner that:**

- Contributes to environmental sustainability and promotes stewardship by visitors and residents alike, relying on the precautionary principle whenever uncertainty exists.
- Respects all living things, Indigenous rights and titles, community values, and sense of place in each community.
- Retains authenticity and celebrates that which is local.
- Contributes to resident quality of life, and overall community resiliency.
- Supports safe and reliable travel.
- Seeks to collaborate, innovate, and employ best practices.

**In addition, when considering guiding principles for regional destination development, the following should also be considered:**

- Tourism growth must be balanced with meeting visitor's needs to ensure any visit to the Kootenay Rockies is a positive and memorable experience.
- Tourism development will be focused on both collaborative region-wide initiatives, as well as individual community-based or corridor-based opportunities that are transformative and strengthen long-term product competitiveness of the entire Kootenay Rockies region.



- Tourism partners will work together to spread the benefits of tourism throughout the Kootenay Rockies, and work to disperse visitors to less frequented areas, ensuring prosperity is shared by all and ecosystem health is maintained.
- Tourism will be part of a larger effort to support and engage Indigenous communities and peoples. Growth must be respectful of the rights, title, and cultural history of the Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs, as well as agreements among governments.
- Tourism will enhance the attractiveness of the Kootenay Rockies for residents and support the lifestyle residents choose to live here for.
- Growth must enhance and support the long-term retention of community character and personality and enhance the distinctiveness of the Kootenay Rockies.
- Visitors will be an integral part of the stewardship efforts and will be educated to be respectful travellers.
- Tourism will reinforce the Kootenay Rockies values of inclusiveness, openness, diversity, and respect.
- Growth must be managed, step-by-step, building on what we have now and leveraging our existing infrastructure.
- Growth must coexist with other valued industries, including forestry, mining, and agriculture.

## 4.3 DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AREAS

The existing visitor experiences found in the Kootenay Rockies region stand shoulder-to-shoulder with those found elsewhere in the province and, in many cases, around the world. In particular, the many ski resorts and backcountry lodges offering fantastic winter experiences, the neighbouring small towns, a variety of hot springs experiences, and numerous golfing opportunities are some of the best in the province. Further, these experiences all come with the irreplaceable Kootenay “sense of place” that many destinations outside of the region strive to achieve. Here, it is simply part of the region’s essence.

Despite these strengths, the region experiences relatively low levels of year-round visitation. This can be explained in large part by the region’s access limitations. With improved access, the Kootenay Rockies region is expected to quickly experience growth in visitation. However, should access improve, it is likely that this incremental visitation would come during the current peaks in summer, followed by winter, and this growth has the potential to strain both environmental capacity and the social license the industry has in the small towns and communities that host and open their doors to visitors. As a result, any access improvements should be considered in parallel with the development of travel-motivating shoulder season experiences, in an effort to manage, rather than exacerbate, the current “boom and bust” cycle of seasonal visitation. The combination of improved access, with an increase in reasons to travel to the Kootenay Rockies region in the spring and fall, are fundamental to year-round growth and long-term destination success.

It must also be recognized that the Kootenay Rockies region is vast, and its mountainous topography has supported the success of individual destinations more so than the entire region. This too must be considered as destination development advances. Communities anchored by a ski or hot springs resort have relatively prospered and have the capacity to make further tourism investments to foster year-round visitation, and grow tourism’s contribution to the economic mix. Some communities such as Cranbrook, Castlegar, Trail, and Nelson operate as regional service centres, and consider tourism to be only one pillar of economic activity. Outlying areas and small communities have struggled to weather the boom and bust cycle of visitation and, as a consequence, often have a limited number of visitor experiences available that would motivate and monetize travel; the natural

assets are the draw, and there is growing resentment over use of the playground without financial contribution to local economies. All community perspectives must be considered and managed as destination development efforts proceed, so residents feel valued and the support for tourism grows throughout the region. Current successful destinations

should be supported so they may continue to thrive, while new successes should be fostered more widely throughout the region.

Recognizing this general background, the following destination development strategy areas for the Kootenay Rockies region have been identified in support of the 10-year vision:

OUR NATURE DEFINES US	OUR PEOPLE DIFFERENTIATE US	OUR COLLABORATION ACCELERATES US
Monitor and Respect Environmental Carrying Capacity	Build Strong Relationships with Indigenous Communities	Address Tourism Labour Shortages and Workforce Housing
Monitor and Manage Experiential Carrying Capacity	Build Understanding of the Value of Tourism and Create Tourism Ambassadors	Invest in Training and Service
Continue to Offer Remarkable Outdoor Recreation Experiences	Celebrate Community Authenticity and Respect Local Values	Develop a Supportive Tourism Business Climate
	Contribute to Community Sustainability and Resiliency	Support Local Arts, Culture, Heritage
		Deliver Safe, Reliable Access and Quality Infrastructure and Signage

## 4.4 OUR NATURE DEFINES US

### Monitor and Respect Environmental Carrying Capacity:

The health of the environment is considered vital to the current and ongoing success of the region as a tourism destination, and the impacts of tourism visitation should be measured, monitored, and mitigated to ensure the region is managed for responsible, sustainable tourism growth. Identification of an appropriate, internationally recognized accreditation program for the designation of “sustainable destination” status should be pursued. Infrastructure should be planned to alleviate, and marketing undertaken to redirect, the pressure of increased visitation on the environment. Visitors should be educated and encouraged to tread lightly, embracing their role as “temporary locals”. Recognizing that the tourism industry has been hard hit by forest fires and is vulnerable to changing snow packs, it is important to build awareness of climate change impacts and to develop and activate adaptation strategies leading to a more resilient industry. These strategies should include measurement, and reduction, of the industry’s carbon footprint.

### Monitor and Manage Experiential Carrying Capacity:

It is expected that conflicts between motorized and non-motorized recreation, and between public recreation and commercial tenure holders, will continue, and there is a strong desire to convene a table to discuss these various interests, and negotiate ‘zones of use’ that can be adopted and enforced. This review of conflicts should also consider experiential carrying capacity, and the point at which ‘over-tourism’ in popular spots will undermine the very essence of the region’s unique selling proposition.

Stakeholders also feel strongly that a comprehensive land use planning and management framework is needed that will provide reasonable certainty to tourism operators, while engaging fully with First Nations, public and commercial recreationalists, motorized and non-motorized users, residents, and other industries. This process will require resources both for planning and for ongoing management and enforcement.

### Continue to Offer Remarkable Outdoor Recreation Experiences:

There are a number of motivating outdoor recreation experiences that currently draw visitation to the region including snow-based activities (ski resorts, cat-ski, heli-ski, backcountry lodges, snowmobiling, Nordic, snowshoeing), hot springs experiences and touring, trail-based activities (hiking, mountain biking), water-based

WHITEWATER SKI RESORT  
Photo: Kari Medig



BLANKET CREEK  
Photo: Ryan Creary



experiences (angling, paddling, rafting), camping, and visiting the many national and provincial parks in the region. The continued success of these motivating experiences must be supported throughout destination development.

In the 2014 Destination BC summary of the Outdoor Adventure Tourism Sector profile, it was reported that while growth in the outdoor adventure tourism sector has been strong, the Adventure Travel Trade Association predicted growth will slow over the next decade, reaching a plateau in 2020. Key market segments for British Columbia's outdoor adventure products are aging, and the physical limitations of aging participants will require businesses to address accessibility. Done well, accessible outdoor adventure may become another element of the region's competitive advantage.

AS THE POPULATION AGES, IT IS PREDICTED THE DEMAND FOR SOFT ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS WILDLIFE VIEWING AND WALKING WILL GROW. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE KOOTENAY ROCKIES REGION TO OFFER A RANGE OF PRODUCTS TO ENSURE OFFERINGS MEET THE BROAD INTERESTS AND PHYSICAL CAPACITIES OF ALL TRAVELLERS.

Due to the diversity of outdoor adventure activities, there are numerous potential issues that could curtail growth in any one area. Potential barriers include land access challenges (tenure to other sectors, resource road deactivation and maintenance), government regulatory requirements (e.g., habitat closures), over visitation in sensitive natural areas, and climate change impacts (e.g., declining snow packs, wildfire events).

Trails are a significant travel motivator for the entire region, with strategies and actions being implemented thanks to strong community support and ongoing robust planning work. These efforts should continue to be enhanced and supported. Sustainable funding sources for trail maintenance remain elusive however, and volunteer burnout is a concern. As well, additional engagement and dialogue is needed with regard to resource road access and maintenance, to ensure that strategic resource roads which provide access to important trail heads or recreation areas are identified, and agreements and intentions related to deactivation and ongoing maintenance are addressed.

Cyclists are coming to the region, and there is opportunity to grow road cycling visitation. The many rail trails in the region present an important growth opportunity for accessible cycling experiences, as does the widening of shoulders to enhance cyclist safety. Problematically, the terrain of the planning area creates challenges, and significant costs for shoulder widening. However, identifying a limited number of iconic cycling routes and focusing on shoulder widening specific to these routes has been identified as worthy of further consideration.

Water-based activities and experiences have been identified as a priority sector, yet there are gaps in the infrastructure and services that are necessary to fully capitalize on this opportunity, and there are concerns from residents over the nature of visitor use (motorized vs. non-motorized; size of engine etc.). Where appropriate, there is need for additional access points, boat launches, safe harbours, fuel stations, and pump-outs to both enhance the visitor experience, and to ensure that the quality of the resource and the environmental impacts of visitor use are appropriately managed. Additional equipment rentals and guided tours are desired, however it will depend on the private sector and the free market economy to identify and activate these opportunities; destination development can only create a supportive climate within which this can occur.



KOOTENAY LAKE  
Photo: Dave Heath

## 4.5 OUR PEOPLE DIFFERENTIATE US

### **Build Strong Relationships with Indigenous Communities:**

Indigenous communities in the Kootenay Rockies region are engaged in various processes to have a visible presence throughout their traditional territories, to build local capacity and interest in the tourism economy, and to launch and expand market-ready visitor experiences. Strong relationships between all members of the tourism success network are essential for destination success.

### **Celebrate Community Authenticity and Respect Local Values:**

Community authenticity and local values should be both celebrated and supported throughout destination development. The capability of small towns to retain and preserve their character through the destination development process is of paramount importance to many. The local support needed for tourism, including tourism businesses and development, will only occur if there is confidence that this character is being honored and protected.

### **Contribute to Community Sustainability and Resiliency:**

Municipal and social services, as well as the capacity of volunteer clubs and organizations, are being strained by increasing levels of visitation. It is important to continue to provide these services, and to support local experiences (e.g., trails, festivals); additional financial tools would help relieve the burden placed on small resident populations.

### **Address Tourism Labour Shortages and Workforce Housing:**

There are significant human resource challenges that need to be addressed. The labour pool, staff skillsets, and affordable, relevant, and accessible training are all critical elements to business success and the visitor experience. Increased affordable workforce housing can be considered through policy tools (sharing economy bylaws, zoning enforcement, etc.), and also through various incentives and development charges on the private sector.

### **Invest in Training and Service:**

Offering exceptional visitor experiences, and consistent, high quality service are fundamental to destination success, and will require a commitment to provide and to participate in relevant, cost-effective staff and business owner training programs across the region. Continued partnerships with educational institutions, including targeted curriculum building to support industry needs, will allow the region collectively to achieve its desired status as a preferred tourism employer and the region of choice to build a long-term career in the tourism industry.

### Support Local Arts, Culture and Heritage:

Opportunities to share local arts, culture, and heritage can be supported through destination development, creating and enhancing opportunities for visitors to connect to the region and truly become “temporary locals”, as well as creating added-value experiences.

SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY EXISTS TO ENHANCE THE INDIGENOUS CULTURAL PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCE INVENTORY. IT IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED THAT INDIGENOUS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT NEEDS TO COME FROM THE FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES THEMSELVES, IN ORDER FOR IT TO BE AUTHENTIC AND RESPECTFUL. THERE IS INTEREST IN SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF FURTHER INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES AS PART OF THE REGION'S UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION.

Many existing festivals and events are nearing capacity in terms of their footprint, required resources, and volunteer capacity. There continues to be date conflicts between festivals and events within the region, with the need for better coordination to be understood, and solutions manifesting in the growing support for a region-wide festivals and events calendar. Many of the current events occur in peak season when visitation is already strong, motivating travel when capacity is already full. Events have the potential to draw overnight visitation, and there is an understanding of the need to predominately focus festivals and event resources on existing, or new, events occurring in shoulder seasons. However, there is concern about the additional burden this would place on volunteers, and working collaboratively to resource paid positions presents a regional opportunity.

The region has demonstrated that arts and culture are a tourism draw and offer potential for further growth. Existing events can be expanded, and there is room to create an even stronger creative economy connecting visitors to the cultural offerings found in many small communities. Creative and learning tourism is a growing trend, and visitors are increasingly seeking authentic opportunities to develop new skills and expand existing skills.

There is potential for developing a collection of heritage-related experiences to support longer stays. Alongside the rich First Nations culture throughout the region, each community in the region has its own interesting heritage story to tell, and the opportunity exists to work collaboratively to create themed routes that combine these experiences and increase visitor dispersion.

## 4.6 OUR COLLABORATION ACCELERATES US.

### Build Understanding of the Value of Tourism and Create Tourism Ambassadors:

There are significant opportunities to improve local government and community support of tourism and tourism businesses. Resident support is an important part of the development of the destination, yet not all residents understand what tourism is, the benefits it brings, or the support it requires. Programs to increase resident understanding of the value of the tourism industry, and to create destination ambassadors at all visitor touchpoints (residents, front-line staff, visitor centre teams, etc.) are needed for destination success.

The visitor services offerings in the planning area all operate independently, with no formal shared strategy for servicing visitors to the area (informal relationships exist). There are opportunities to work cooperatively, educate each other, and enhance visitor services so that visitors remain within the region longer.

Collaboration within, and between, communities, businesses, and non-profits will further individual and collective goals, and the creation of multi-community itineraries and themed journeys through the region is considered a priority.

### Develop a Supportive Tourism Business Climate:

There is an opportunity to create a supportive business climate for tourism entrepreneurs—one that leads in the province. Existing support and resources, through organizations like Community Futures, the efforts of Imagine Kootenay, and the different Economic Development Initiatives in the region, are recognized and valued, but navigating these resources and accessing capital is still felt to be somewhat complex. Desired business support includes handholding through processes and approvals, mentoring, developing business plans, providing grant application assistance, and ultimately, easier access to capital. Opportunities exist to streamline government process and to address specific challenges such as prohibitive costs associated with liability insurance. Further, a reasonable degree of certainty of access to the land and water base is needed to support capital investment by tourism operators; a certainty that can only occur through an effective land use planning and management process.

### Deliver Safe and Reliable Access and Quality Infrastructure and Signage:

The region offers travellers many unique destinations, as well as the opportunity for touring. Travel corridors must serve these dual markets—there must be both efficient and safe routes to a specific destination, and concurrently an intriguing journey for those seeking to tour and explore. Consequently, destination development must consider both the need for safe and efficient travel corridors that include multi-modal forms of transportation, and the need to create compelling, themed journeys. This can only be achieved through collaboration across Ministries,

throughout all levels of government, and between the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors.

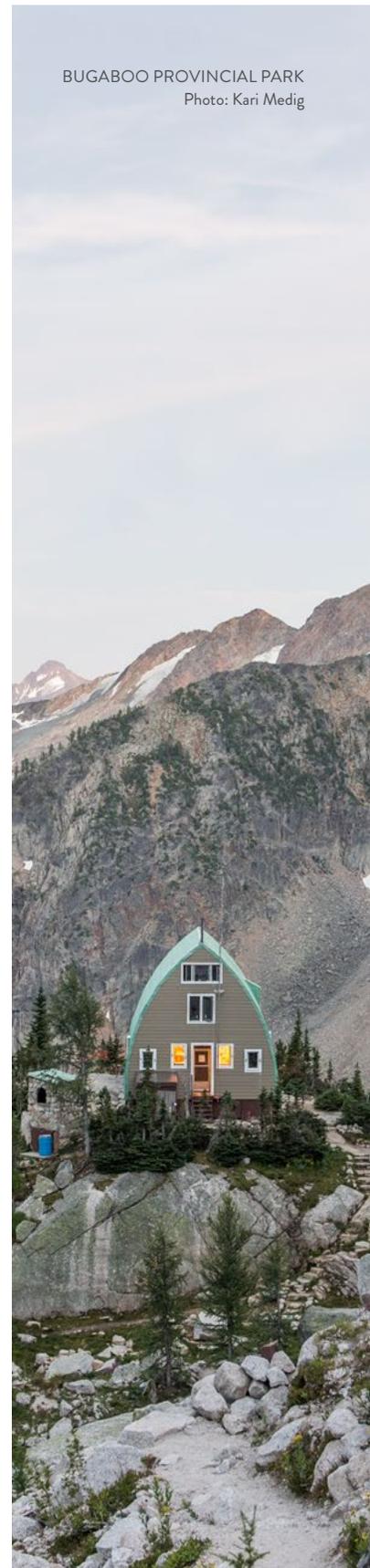
Safety, and the perception of safety, including the communication of accurate and timely information to travellers, is an essential base condition for destination success in the Kootenay Rockies region. Travel routes should be safe and reliable, with safety encompassing all seasons and including vehicle standards, driver education, emergency response planning, and resources for communities responsible for responding to incidents.

### FOR ALL MARKETS THERE ARE FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF THE VISITOR JOURNEY.

Enhancements to travel quality will require strategic investment in well-located infrastructure, services, and amenities including compelling information about upcoming communities and attractions that motivate visitation and longer stays. Circle route opportunities and scenic side-trips also offer potential to enhance the traveller experience, and support longer lengths of stay and spending in local economies.

The overall lift, reliability, and luggage capacity of international and regional airports must be addressed to support increasing international visitation and ease of access. Further, inter-modal transportation options to connect communities to airports, as well as transportation options to connect communities to various activities and to each other should also be considered in regional destination development.

BUGABOO PROVINCIAL PARK  
Photo: Kari Medig





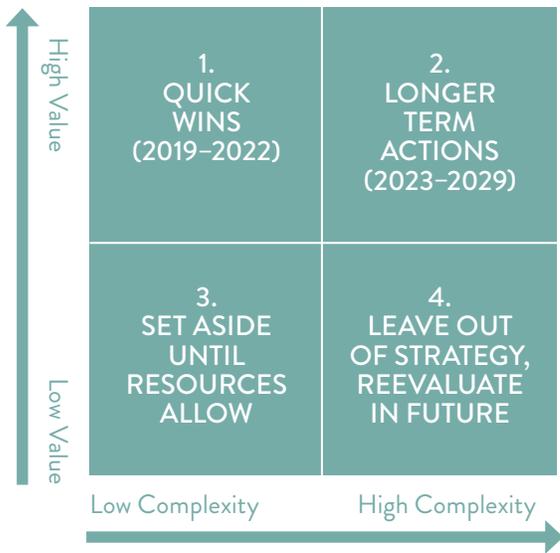
IDAHO PEAK, NEAR NEW DENVER.  
Photo: Dave Heath

While signage and wayfinding has been improving in recent years, continued improvements in the front, mid, and backcountry will support the dispersion of visitors around the region, and into areas that have both the environmental and experiential capacity to support them. Signage presents an opportunity to include an element of interpretation of the history and heritage of the area, with particular emphasis on Indigenous presence, serving to enrich the visitor experience. Signage also presents an opportunity to direct visitors to less sensitive areas, and to share a respectful code of conduct. Investments in signage should be integrated and coordinated, so that there is consistency and visual reinforcement as the traveller moves through the region, utilizing maps and apps, as well as physical signage.

THERE IS SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY TO FILL CAPACITY IN THE SHOULDER SEASONS, AND TO INCREASE THE UTILIZATION OF EXISTING AND PLANNED INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS.

A strong focus on developing the region in a manner that attracts visitation and business more consistently throughout the year, in a steadier flow, is desired in order to support small business viability. Encouraging appropriate and consistent business hours of operation, and increasing attractive year-round, weather protected infrastructure, the number of weather independent activities, soft adventures offerings, and services suitable for all ages and levels of expertise and fitness will be important in the Kootenay Rockies region.

# 5. KOOTENAY ROCKIES STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



The prioritization of each objective and the relative timing for implementation is based on the following framework.

- 1. QUICK WINS** high value tactics with low complexity and can be achieved within 3 years (2019-2022).
- 2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS** high value, high complexity that require 4 to 10 years to achieve the result (2023-2029) albeit activities can begin immediately to achieve the outcome.
- 3. SET ASIDE UNTIL RESOURCES ALLOW** low complexity and low value, address when time/resources exist.
- 4. LEAVE OUT OF STRATEGY, RE-EVALUATE IN FUTURE** high complexity and low value, not realistically achieved in the 10-year time frame of this strategy.

Presenting the destination development objectives with a consistent framework will allow the province and the tourism region to examine the various priorities across all strategies. The regional strategy elevates the objectives and actions identified within planning areas strategies that would benefit from regional leadership and coordination for implementation. Considerable effort has gone into developing the regional strategy in an integrated way with priorities from the four planning areas strategies helping to shape the priorities of this strategy.

Specific strategies for each of the identified destination development themes follow. Projects that are considered catalysts for immediately moving the Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy into implementation are noted first under each development theme.

## DEVELOPMENT THEME 1: OUR NATURE DEFINES US

CATALYST PROJECTS	PRIORITY
<p>1. Work collaboratively to create and communicate a code of respectful and safe conduct and a shared story (including invasive species education) for front, mid, and backcountry, to educate both residents and visitors; distribution should be both to public recreationalists, and also to visitors via operators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research better practices in other jurisdictions and determine transferrable lessons to the Kootenay Rockies region.</li> <li>• Convene a forum of stakeholders, including tourism operators, search and rescue organizations, emergency responders, invasive species societies, Backcountry sectors, Parks Canada, ENV, FLNR, TRAN, and TAC, and review better practices.</li> <li>• Draft a code of conduct and solicit further input from stakeholders.</li> <li>• Encourage all tourism operators, clubs, and societies to share and distribute this code of conduct through their channels.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> Tourism operators, Backcountry sectors, AdventureSmart BC, KRT, DBC, ENV, FLNR, TRAN, Parks Canada, Search and Rescue (SAR) organizations, Emergency Responders, Invasive Species Societies, environment stewardship organizations (Wildsight), local clubs and trails associations</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>2. Collaborate with stakeholders to build awareness of the value of the tourism industry, and to create a regional master planning area map of high-use areas and high-sensitivity areas (land and water), to be used to inform land management planning processes, and other plans for infrastructure development in these areas (e.g., rest stops, lookouts, washrooms, parking for private vehicles/buses, bike racks, signage, water access, boat launches, marinas, shelters, wi-fi and connectivity, accessibility considerations, invasive species cleaning stations, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for expressions of interest in each of four working groups (one per planning area).</li> <li>• Establish planning area working groups to determine planning area high use and/or high sensitivity areas.</li> <li>• Review planning area maps with Provincial Ministry representatives.</li> <li>• Consolidate planning area maps into a regional map to be used to inform land and resource planning processes and public sector investments in infrastructure.</li> <li>• Share broadly with public and private sector investors.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, local clubs and trail societies, local stewardship groups, tourism operators, DMOs, local and regional governments, ENV, FLNR, TAC, TRAN</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p>
<p>3. Work collaboratively with Provincial Ministries and Indigenous groups to develop a process and a land and water management framework leading to a shared stewardship and enforcement model that recognizes the significant contribution of the tourism industry, is adequately funded, and will provide environmental protection, mitigate usage conflicts (human and wildlife), manage inter-industry uses, and provide reasonable certainty for tourism development, motorized and non-motorized use, public and commercial recreation uses, and maintenance of viewscapes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate discussions with Provincial Ministries and DBC as part of the Provincial Destination Development Strategy.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC, TAC, ENV, FLNR, TRAN, sector associations, local governments, tourism operators, local clubs and trail societies, local stewardship groups</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>4. Create a climate action task force and work together with the Province to develop an agreed approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation, to be used to educate the industry and visitors, and to share best practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for expressions of interest to join the task force.</li> <li>• Review of research and better practices globally.</li> <li>• Develop and share resources for tourism operators.</li> <li>• Feature in annual regional tourism conference workshop.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC, educational institutions, TAC, ENV, tourism operators, local stewardship groups, local clubs and trail societies</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>

# CATALYST PROJECTS

# PRIORITY

**5. Participate in the development of a regional sustainability charter and seek sustainable destination accreditation by an internationally recognized body.**

- Review TOTA Biosphere program and designation.
- Research other international accreditation programs for sustainable tourism.
- Review options with KRT DM Committee.
- Pilot with select tourism operators.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, DBC, tourism operators

1. QUICK WINS

**6. Support the development of a wide range of trail-based experiences and trail network enhancement within, and between, communities in the region. Identify and invest in at least one iconic trail experience in each community in the region. Ensure continued support for existing iconic trails.**

- Continue to attend local and regional trail forums and provide regional and market perspective to development plans.
- Recommend a proposed regional mix of iconic trail experiences to meet the experiential needs of all target markets, ages, and abilities, and promote opportunities to fill any 'gaps' in the current trail inventory to achieve this mix.
- Support legal trail building and trail maintenance to the highest standards/best practices, with respect to environmental impacts; support local trail societies, and work with government agencies to secure enforcement resources.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, local clubs and trail societies, tourism operators, DMOs, CBT, Parks Canada, ENV, FLNR, TAC

2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS

**7. Work collaboratively to identify sustainable funding for trail development and maintenance to support efforts of local volunteers.**

- Participate in discussions with Provincial Ministries and local trail groups to review potential funding sources (e.g., off-road vehicle licensing fees).
- Research better practices in other jurisdictions.
- Recommend funding mechanisms.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, DBC, FLNR, ENV, TAC, FIN, local clubs and trail societies, tourism operators

2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS

PROVINCIAL SCOPE

**8. Support improved accessibility of infrastructure, trails, businesses and services for visitors of all ages and abilities.**

- Continue to work with Spinal Cord Injury BC to understand needs and priorities.
- Secure a Regional Accessibility Specialist to:
  - Deliver educational workshop on Universal Design to tourism operators, parks and recreation stakeholders, city planners, etc.
  - Conduct an assessment of attractions and businesses and provide recommendations for improvements.
  - Identify sources of funding to assist tourism operators in upgrading their facilities.
  - Promote accessible attractions and experiences in the Kootenay Rockies (i.e.: AccessBC website directory).

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, Spinal Cord Injury BC, Rick Hansen Foundation, DBC, tourism operators, educational institutions

2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS

OTHER OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY
<p>9. Support and promote invasive species education and eradication initiatives and include appropriate messaging in visitor communication channels.</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>10. Create an inventory of current experiential offerings and infrastructure within, between, and outside communities and identify existing gaps. Work collaboratively to address gaps in infrastructure, and to promote investment opportunities for the public and private sectors to develop additional experiences where needed.</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p>
<p>11. Work with Provincial Ministries and other industries to ensure maintenance of key resource roads.</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>12. Continue to expand high season camping capacity in strategic locations (Parks Canada, Provincial Parks, Rec, Sites and Trails, potential new municipally-owned campgrounds); review seasonal opening and closings, and review reserve and drop-in ratios and policies at park sites to ensure greater overall occupancy. Encourage investments in infrastructure to support ready-to-camp experiences.</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p>

## DEVELOPMENT THEME 2: OUR PEOPLE DIFFERENTIATE US

CATALYST PROJECTS	PRIORITY
<p>13. Work together with KRT, ITBC, and the Province to secure a regional resource within Kootenay Rockies Tourism to work with the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) Peoples, and to support Indigenous tourism development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiate funding agreement with Province, ITBC, DBC.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC, ITBC, the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples, educational institutions</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p>
<p>14. Conduct Indigenous cultural awareness training, including protocols for engaging with the Ktunaxa, and continue to build relationships between all First Nations communities, local communities, and tourism operators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work collaboratively with Indigenous community representatives to create a training program and workshop materials for use with tourism operators.</li> <li>Pilot workshop and training.</li> <li>Refine, and offer widely throughout the region.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, ITBC, the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples, representatives, DMOs, Chambers, Economic Development Organizations, tourism operators</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p>

# CATALYST PROJECTS

# PRIORITY

**15. Continue to work collaboratively with the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples, to incorporate oral histories and place names into interpretation and signage where they deem appropriate.**

- Build relationships with representatives from each Nation.
- Review regional map and collaboratively identify intersections of visitor traffic spots, and cultural sharing opportunities.
- Prioritize key opportunities.
- Secure funding to create and produce approved content.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** Indigenous communities, KRT, ITBC, DBC, IRR, TAC, TRAN, ENV, Parks Canada, municipalities

2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS

**16. Secure resources and working together with DBC Research Services, implement a consistent methodology to measure and communicate the economic, social, cultural and environmental value of the tourism industry in each community, and across the region.**

- Identify methodology that is both statistically accurate and relatively simple to implement.
- Pilot in several communities.
- Refine, and roll-out to all communities in the region.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, DBC, DMOs and Chambers, tourism operators

2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS

PROVINCIAL SCOPE

**17. Convene an annual Festival & Events forum to optimize the nature and timing of key events. Support regional capacity building for event planning and coordination.**

- Review current calendar of festivals and events.
- Categorize events as to whether they motivate travel, have the potential to motivate travel, or are more community focused in nature.
- Identify strategic opportunities to create events that will motivate travel in need periods throughout the region.
- Identify opportunities for resource sharing and leveraging (e.g., a festivals and events coordinator working across multiple communities).
- Share best practices in volunteer engagement, retention, and recognition.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, festivals and event organizers, DMOs, Chambers, local clubs and volunteer groups, arts, culture and heritage societies, tourism operators, TAC

1. QUICK WINS

**18. Continue to investigate and pilot customized approaches to create a cross-season/cross-business job pool to support year-round staff retention within, and between, communities.**

- Roll out pilot initiatives more broadly throughout the region.
- Identify new programs and opportunities.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, Go2HR, educational institutions, tourism operators, Imagine Kootenay

1. QUICK WINS

**19. Design and execute regional campaigns to promote tourism career awareness and labour attraction from in and out of province.**

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, Go2HR, CDMOs, educational institutions, tourism operators, Imagine Kootenay

1. QUICK WINS

OTHER OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY
20. Build awareness of employment opportunities in tourism for the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples, and create necessary support systems for Indigenous employee success.	2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS
21. Cross-educate visitor centres, front-line staff, and other potential visitor ambassadors (via familiarization tours or experience showcases); participate in broader resident and cross-industry education programs.	1. QUICK WINS
22. Support the development of local and regional workforce housing strategies (learning from best practices of other communities and regions), including a review of potential funding sources for housing strategy implementation.	2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS PROVINCIAL SCOPE
23. Investigate various impacts of online accommodation platforms (pros/cons) on the health and success of the tourism industry. Participate in the summarization of various approaches being adopted around the province to manage and monitor nightly rentals being offered through these platforms (e.g., VRBO, Airbnb). Engage with small property hosts to share tourism research and training.	2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS PROVINCIAL SCOPE
24. Participate in the creation of a source of best policies and practices for consideration by local and regional governments wishing to create a supportive policy and regulatory framework for tourism businesses.	2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS PROVINCIAL SCOPE
25. Build awareness of existing training programs available through the new Workforce Development Agreement and of training grants and wage support programs (e.g., Employer Training Grant, Canada BC Job grant) and of other services available through Small Business BC.	1. QUICK WINS
26. Continue to work closely with post-secondary institutions to ensure curriculums offered, and tourism industry needs, align.	1. QUICK WINS
27. Identify and communicate training opportunities that are relevant, affordable, and that can be delivered on the business premises, and promote them to owners and staff (e.g., 3 hour modules). A regional train-the-trainer program should be included to support the reach and affordability of training.	1. QUICK WINS
28. Encourage all tourism experience providers in the region to participate in Destination BC's Remarkable Experiences program, or other similar training opportunities. Begin to establish a baseline and measure the quality of visitor experience (e.g., Net Promoter Score)	1. QUICK WINS
29. Work collaboratively to provide training and education to businesses and operators on export-readiness, and on how best to serve travellers from emerging markets as well as new Canadians (e.g., Asia/Pacific – China, South Korea, etc.)	1. QUICK WINS PROVINCIAL SCOPE
30. Investigate possible pooled liability insurance programs for land-based and water-based activity operators, transportation/shuttle operators, and other tourism experience providers; identify sector organizations who have, or are working on, pooled liability programs (e.g., Paddle Canada, Backcountry Lodges, HeliCat Canada, Commercial Snowmobile).	2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS PROVINCIAL SCOPE

# DEVELOPMENT THEME 3: OUR COLLABORATION ACCELERATES US

CATALYST PROJECTS	PRIORITY
<p><b>31. Continue to leverage the Kootenay Rockies Regional Destination Management Committee as an advisory group for regional destination development issues, and as champions in each community and sector.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and endorse 10-year regional destination development strategy.</li> <li>• Assign portfolios to each Committee member.</li> <li>• Plan the dissemination of the strategy throughout the region.</li> <li>• Meet regularly to discuss implementation efforts.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p>
<p><b>32. Create a regional advocacy coalition to consolidate the voice of the many small sectors actively engaged in lobbying government, and to facilitate work with TIABC. Continue dialogue between tourism and other industries, and between tourism industry and various Ministries.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify key issues and interested or affected stakeholders.</li> <li>• Conduct introductory e-meeting to determine appropriateness and form of coordinated effort.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, tourism operators, local clubs and trail societies, local stewardship groups, Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia (TIABC)</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p>
<p><b>33. Create and participate in a regional multi-modal transportation committee to strategize on the multi-modal transportation options and priorities to be pursued to achieve a cohesive, affordable, and reliable transportation network throughout the region, that addresses the needs of visitors and workers moving between and around communities.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicit expressions of interest to participate on a multi-modal transportation committee from a wide range of industries and stakeholders.</li> <li>• Convene multi-modal transportation committee, and initiate discussions.</li> <li>• Research better practices in other jurisdictions.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with TRAN to review standards and enforcement of road maintenance and avalanche control included in operator contracts throughout the region.</li> <li>• Advocate for increased air access, affordable, and reliable flights through international and regional airports.</li> <li>• Work with car rental agencies to increase the availability of rental cars in the region and ensure vehicles are equipped with winter tires.</li> <li>• Support the introduction of a variable speed corridor along the entire length of Highway 1, and lower speed limits for commercial traffic.</li> <li>• Advocate for improved avalanche risk management infrastructure (e.g., snow sheds) and avalanche prevention scheduling to reduce the number and duration of closures.</li> <li>• Participate in the development of a visitor-informed signage assessment, including a province-wide review of highway signage.</li> <li>• Advocate for uninterrupted cellular service along major highways.</li> <li>• Advocate for continued improvements to regional airports to support improved service, increased capacity (including luggage capacity), and more reliable access in mountain terrain/weather conditions. Participate in discussions regarding West Kootenay Airport reliability and the potential rationalization of regional air access in Castlegar and Trail. Monitor West Kootenay Airport improvements to assess their success and transferability to Revelstoke.</li> <li>• Identify road improvements that would motivate longer trip duration and greater spending in Kootenay communities/resorts, and present business plan for any associated road improvements to TRAN.</li> <li>• Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and local governments on improving regional transportation networks for cyclists. Work with partners to identify 1-2 iconic road cycling routes in the region and prioritize discussions with TRAN to look for opportunities for shoulder widening and cyclist-friendly improvements on these routes first.</li> <li>• Review shuttle service viability, subsidy options for scheduled services, and/or improve public transit options for staff and visitor movement between gateway airports, communities, and experiences.</li> <li>• Investigate possible passenger rail enhancements, additional stops/stations, and improved schedules and services on existing rail infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, TRAN, local and regional governments, tourism operators, educational institutions, CBT, Imagine Kootenay, residents, transportation industry, forestry industry, airport operators, bus and shuttle companies, DMOs, emergency responders</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p>

# CATALYST PROJECTS

# PRIORITY

34. Work collaboratively with Drive BC/AB, emergency responders, RCMP, and TRAN to align communications within, and across, provincial boundaries in order to ensure positive and 'open for business' facts are promoted as well as accurate, factual, and timely information regarding incidents.

- Engage Drive BC/AB in discussions and confirm their commitment to further discussions.
- Develop flowchart of 'if/then' scenarios and associated messaging for use in consistent communication.
- Develop protocols and key contacts for unanticipated situations.
- Pilot and implement.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, Drive BC/AB, TRAN, emergency responders, DMOs, Visitor Centres, DBC, local and regional government, tourism operators

1. QUICK WINS

PROVINCIAL SCOPE

## OTHER OBJECTIVES

PRIORITY

35. Provide on-going liaison and support to the project management efforts and monitor progress in each of the four planning areas (West Kootenays & Revelstoke, Highway 3 Corridor, Columbia Valley, Highway 1 Corridor) in the implementation of catalyst projects and high priority actions.

1. QUICK WINS

36. Work collaboratively with Parks Canada and provide a collective vision and clear definition of needs for traveller services and amenities in national parks.

1. QUICK WINS

37. Work collaboratively with provincial ministries to review potential additional uses of Agricultural Land Reserve for tourism business opportunities.

2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS

PROVINCIAL SCOPE

# 6. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

A common and consistent planning approach was used in the region that enables the planning area strategies and regional strategy, as well as the provincial strategy, to be easily linked together and coordinated for implementation.

The common approach sets the foundation for the ongoing dialogue, prioritization, and cohesion needed to provide the tourism region with a distinct competitive advantage. It also provides all partners with a framework to translate the planning area strategies and regional strategy into action in a consistent, integrated manner.

Considerable effort has gone into developing the Regional Destination Development Strategy in an integrated way, with objectives from the planning area strategies informing the regional strategy. This ensures a more coordinated and strategic approach to strengthening tourism across the planning areas, region, and province.

This integrated approach will deliver strategically aligned plans providing direct benefit to all. When implementation is successful at one planning level, the strategy implementation can be expedited for all levels.

While local champions and tourism partners will continue to focus on implementation for the Columbia Valley, West Kootenays & Revelstoke, Highway 1 Corridor and Highway 3 Corridor, the regional strategy will guide and coordinate efforts at the regional level to ensure the priorities are executed with an integrated approach. It is critical all strategies are coordinated as they are being implemented to ensure maximum impact and effectiveness of these efforts and that collective progress is being monitored.



REVELSTOKE  
Photo: David Gluns

# 7. MEASURING AND MONITORING SUCCESS

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK  
Photo: Ryan Creary



Ultimately, the overall objective of this Destination Development Strategy is to help guide the growth of the Kootenay Rockies tourism sector in an economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally sustainable manner over the next 10 years. The following recommended measurements can be used to monitor the success of the tourism industry in the Kootenay Rockies, and the implementation of this plan.

CRANBROOK  
Photo: Kari Medig



GOALS	RECOMMENDED MEASUREMENT	SOURCE
Increase shoulder season visitation and work towards a year-round tourism economy.	Occupancy levels in the shoulder season	Commercial Accommodation Survey, BC Stats accommodation revenue reporting
Increase average length of stay and average visitor yield in the region in each season.	Accommodation revenues Average Length of Stay	BC Stats accommodation revenue reporting, Visitor intercept surveys and/or accommodation surveys
Develop strategies to adapt to climate change and to reduce the contribution of the tourism industry to greenhouse gas emissions.	Measurements to be developed	
Improve resident recognition of tourism as a positive contributor to community resiliency and quality of life.	Support for tourism industry	Resident surveys
Improve tourism business ability to attract, retain, and house skilled staff and thereby enhance the climate for tourism business success.	Number of tourism businesses Number reporting anticipated growth	RDI, State of the Basin, Tourism reports Chamber business walks
Increase overall visitor destination satisfaction rating as measured by a tool such as Net Promoter Score.	Net Promoter Score or equivalent	Visitor Intercept Surveys; TripAdvisor rating scans
Become a leader in inter-modal transportation and rural connectivity.	Number of inter-connected transportation options available to travellers	State of the Basin studies, studies in partnership with educational institutions
Attract visitors to the region from more diverse markets so as to eventually increase the proportion of long-haul fly-in visitors.	Traveller area of origin	Visitor intercept studies/international lift into Canadian Rockies International Airport

# 8. CATALYST PROJECTS

The following objectives were identified as top priority catalyst projects for immediately moving the Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy into implementation (note numbering is non-sequential to permit cross referencing to table above which list all actions):

CATALYST PROJECTS	PRIORITY
<p>1. Work collaboratively to create and communicate a code of respectful and safe conduct and a shared story (including invasive species education) for front, mid, and backcountry, to educate both residents and visitors; distribution should be both to public recreationalists, and also to visitors via operators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research better practices in other jurisdictions and determine transferrable lessons to the Kootenay Rockies region.</li> <li>• Convene a forum of stakeholders, including tourism operators, search and rescue organizations, emergency responders, invasive species societies, Backcountry sectors, Parks Canada, ENV, FLNR, TRAN, and TAC, and review better practices.</li> <li>• Draft a code of conduct and solicit further input from stakeholders.</li> <li>• Encourage all tourism operators, clubs, and societies to share and distribute this code of conduct through their channels.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> Tourism operators, Backcountry sectors, AdventureSmart BC, KRT, DBC, ENV, FLNR, TRAN, Parks Canada, Search and Rescue (SAR) organizations, Emergency Responders, Invasive Species Societies, environment stewardship organizations (Wildsight), local clubs and trails associations</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>2. Collaborate with stakeholders to build awareness of the value of the tourism industry, and to create a regional master planning area map of high-use areas and high-sensitivity areas (land and water), to be used to inform land management planning processes, and other plans for infrastructure development in these areas (e.g., rest stops, lookouts, washrooms, parking for private vehicles/buses, bike racks, signage, water access, boat launches, marinas, shelters, wi-fi and connectivity, accessibility considerations, invasive species cleaning stations, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for expressions of interest in each of four working groups (one per planning area).</li> <li>• Establish planning area working groups to determine planning area high use and/or high sensitivity areas.</li> <li>• Review planning area maps with Provincial Ministry representatives.</li> <li>• Consolidate planning area maps into a regional map to be used to inform land and resource planning processes and public sector investments in infrastructure.</li> <li>• Share broadly with public and private sector investors.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, local clubs and trail societies, local stewardship groups, tourism operators, DMOs, local and regional governments, ENV, FLNR, TAC, TRAN</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>

CATALYST PROJECTS	PRIORITY
<p>3. Work collaboratively with Provincial Ministries and Indigenous groups to develop a process and a land and water management framework leading to a shared stewardship and enforcement model that recognizes the significant contribution of the tourism industry, is adequately funded, and will provide environmental protection, mitigate usage conflicts (human and wildlife), manage inter-industry uses, and provide reasonable certainty for tourism development, motorized and non-motorized use, public and commercial recreation uses, and maintenance of viewsapes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate discussions with Provincial Ministries and DBC as part of the Provincial Destination Development Strategy.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC, TAC, ENV, FLNR, TRAN, sector associations, local governments, tourism operators, local clubs and trail societies, local stewardship groups</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>4. Create a climate action task force and work together with the Province to develop an agreed approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation, to be used to educate the industry and visitors, and to share best practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call for expressions of interest to join the task force.</li> <li>Review of research and better practices globally.</li> <li>Develop, and share, resources for tourism operators.</li> <li>Feature in annual regional tourism conference workshop.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC, educational institutions, TAC, ENV, tourism operators, local stewardship groups, local clubs, and trail societies</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>5. Participate in the development of a regional sustainability charter and seek sustainable destination accreditation by an internationally recognized body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review TOTA Biosphere program and designation.</li> <li>Research other international accreditation programs for sustainable tourism.</li> <li>Review options with KRT DM Committee.</li> <li>Pilot with select tourism operators.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC, tourism operators</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>
<p>6. Support the development of a wide range of trail-based experiences and trail network enhancement within, and between, communities in the region. Identify and invest in at least one iconic trail experience in each community in the region. Ensure continued support for existing iconic trails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to attend local and regional trail forums and provide regional and market perspective to development plans.</li> <li>Recommend a proposed regional mix of iconic trail experiences to meet the experiential needs of all target markets, ages, and abilities, and promote opportunities to fill any “gaps” in the current trail inventory to achieve this mix.</li> <li>Support legal trail building and trail maintenance to the highest standards/best practices, with respect to environmental impacts; support local trail societies, and work with government agencies to secure enforcement resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, local clubs and trail societies, tourism operators, DMOs, CBT, Parks Canada, ENV, FLNR, TAC</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>

CATALYST PROJECTS	PRIORITY
<p><b>7. Work collaboratively to identify sustainable funding for trail development and maintenance to support efforts of local volunteers.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to attend local and regional trail forums and provide regional and market perspective to development plans.</li> <li>Recommend a proposed regional mix of iconic trail experiences to meet the experiential needs of all target markets, ages, and abilities, and promote opportunities to fill any “gaps” in the current trail inventory to achieve this mix.</li> <li>Support legal trail building and trail maintenance to the highest standards/best practices, with respect to environmental impacts; support local trail societies, and work with government agencies to secure enforcement resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, local clubs and trail societies, tourism operators, DMOs, CBT, Parks Canada, ENV, FLNR, TAC</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p><b>8. Support improved accessibility of infrastructure, trails, businesses, and services for visitors of all ages and abilities.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work with Spinal Cord Injury BC to understand needs and priorities.</li> <li>Secure a Regional Accessibility Specialist to:</li> <li>Deliver educational workshop on Universal Design to tourism operators, parks and recreation stakeholders, city planners, etc.</li> <li>Conduct an assessment of attractions and businesses, and provide recommendations for improvements.</li> <li>Identify sources of funding to assist tourism operators in upgrading their facilities.</li> <li>Promote accessible attractions and experiences in the Kootenay Rockies (i.e.: AccessBC website directory).</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, Spinal Cord Injury BC, Rick Hansen Foundation, DBC, tourism operators, educational institutions</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>
<p><b>13. Work together with KRT, ITBC, and the Province to secure a regional resource within Kootenay Rockies Tourism to work with the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) Peoples, and to support Indigenous tourism development.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiate funding agreement with Province, ITBC, DBC.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC, ITBC, the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples, educational institutions</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>
<p><b>14. Conduct Indigenous cultural awareness training, including protocols for engaging with the Ktunaxa, and continue to build relationships between all First Nations communities, local communities, and tourism operators.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work collaboratively with Indigenous community representatives to create a training program and workshop materials for use with tourism operators.</li> <li>Pilot workshop and training.</li> <li>Refine, and offer widely throughout the region.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, ITBC, the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples, DMOs, Chambers, Economic Development Organizations, tourism operators</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>
<p><b>15. work collaboratively with the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples, to incorporate.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build relationships with representatives from each Nation.</li> <li>Review regional map and collaboratively identify intersections of visitor traffic spots, and cultural sharing opportunities.</li> <li>Prioritize key opportunities.</li> <li>Secure funding to create and produce approved content.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> the Ktunaxa Nation, the Okanagan Nation, and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples, KRT, ITBC, DBC, IRR, TAC, TRAN, ENV, Parks Canada, municipalities</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>

CATALYST PROJECTS	PRIORITY
<p><b>16. Secure resources and working together with DBC Research Services, implement a consistent methodology to measure and communicate the economic, social, cultural and environmental value of the tourism industry in each community, and across the region.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify methodology that is both statistically accurate and relatively simple to implement.</li> <li>Pilot in several communities.</li> <li>Refine, and roll-out to all communities in the region.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC, DMOs and Chambers, tourism operators</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p><b>17. Convene an annual Festival &amp; Events forum to optimize the nature and timing of key events. Support regional capacity building for event planning and coordination.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review current calendar of festivals and events.</li> <li>Categorize events as to whether they motivate travel, have the potential to motivate travel, or are more community-focused in nature.</li> <li>Identify strategic opportunities to create events that will motivate travel in need periods throughout the region.</li> <li>Identify opportunities for resource sharing and leveraging (e.g., a festivals and events coordinator working across multiple communities).</li> <li>Share best practices in volunteer engagement, retention, and recognition.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, festivals and event organizers, DMOs, Chambers, local clubs and volunteer groups, arts, culture and heritage societies, tourism operators, TAC</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>
<p><b>18. Continue to investigate and pilot customized approaches to create a cross-season/cross-business job pool to support year-round staff retention within, and between, communities.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll out pilot initiatives more broadly throughout the region.</li> <li>Identify new programs and opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, go2HR, CDMOs, educational institutions, tourism operators, Imagine Kootenay</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>
<p><b>19. Design and execute regional campaigns to promote tourism career awareness and labour attraction from in and out of province.</b></p> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, go2HR, CDMOs, educational institutions, tourism operators, Imagine Kootenay</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>
<p><b>31. Continue to leverage the Kootenay Rockies Regional Destination Management Committee as an advisory group for regional destination development issues, and as champions in each community and sector.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and endorse 10-year regional destination development strategy.</li> <li>Assign portfolios to each Committee member.</li> <li>Plan the dissemination of the strategy throughout the region.</li> <li>Meet regularly to discuss implementation efforts.</li> </ul> <p><b>SUCCESS NETWORK</b> KRT, DBC</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>

## CATALYST PROJECTS

## PRIORITY

**32. Create a regional advocacy coalition to consolidate the voice of the many small sectors actively engaged in lobbying government, and to facilitate work with TIABC. Continue dialogue between tourism and other industries, and between tourism industry and various Ministries.**

- Identify key issues and interested or affected stakeholders.
- Conduct introductory e-meeting to determine appropriateness and form of coordinated effort.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, tourism operators, local clubs and trail societies, local stewardship groups, Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia (TIABC)

1. QUICK WINS

CATALYST

**33. Create and participate in a regional multi-modal transportation committee to strategize on the multi-modal transportation options and priorities to be pursued to achieve a cohesive, affordable, and reliable transportation network throughout the region, that addresses the needs of visitors and workers moving between and around communities.**

- Solicit expressions of interest to participate on a multi-modal transportation committee from a wide range of industries and stakeholders.
- Convene multi-modal transportation committee, and initiate discussions.
- Research better practices in other jurisdictions.
- Work collaboratively with TRAN to review standards and enforcement of road maintenance and avalanche control included in operator contracts throughout the region.
- Advocate for increased air access, affordable, and reliable flights through international and regional airports.
- Work with car rental agencies to increase the availability of rental cars in the region and ensure vehicles are equipped with winter tires.
- Support the introduction of a variable speed corridor along the entire length of Highway 1, and lower speed limits for commercial traffic.
- Advocate for improved avalanche risk management infrastructure (e.g., snow sheds) and avalanche prevention scheduling to reduce the number and duration of closures.
- Participate in the development of a visitor-informed signage assessment, including a province-wide review of highway signage.
- Advocate for uninterrupted cellular service along major highways.
- Advocate for continued improvements to regional airports to support improved service, increased capacity (including luggage capacity), and more reliable access in mountain terrain/weather conditions. Participate in discussions regarding West Kootenay Airport reliability and the potential rationalization of regional air access in Castlegar and Trail. Monitor West Kootenay Airport improvements to assess their success and transferability to Revelstoke.
- Identify road improvements that would motivate longer trip duration and greater spending in Kootenay communities/resorts, and present business plan for any associated road improvements to TRAN.
- Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and local governments on improving regional transportation networks for cyclists. Work with partners to identify 1-2 iconic road cycling routes in the region and prioritize discussions with TRAN to look for opportunities for shoulder widening and cyclist friendly improvements on these routes first.
- Review shuttle service viability, subsidy options for scheduled services, and/or improve public transit options for staff and visitor movement between gateway airports, communities, and experiences.
- Investigate possible passenger rail enhancements, additional stops/stations, and improved schedules and services on existing rail infrastructure.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, TRAN, local and regional governments, tourism operators, educational institutions, CBT, Imagine Kootenay, residents, transportation industry, forestry industry, airport operators, bus and shuttle companies, DMOs, emergency responders

2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS

CATALYST

## CATALYST PROJECTS

## PRIORITY

34. Work collaboratively with Drive BC/AB, emergency responders, RCMP, and TRAN to align communications within, and across, provincial boundaries in order to ensure positive and “open for business” facts are promoted as well as accurate, factual, and timely information regarding incidents.

- Engage Drive BC/AB in discussions and confirm their commitment to further discussions.
- Develop flowchart of “if/then” scenarios and associated messaging for use in consistent communication.
- Develop protocols and key contacts for unanticipated situations.
- Pilot and implement.

**SUCCESS NETWORK** KRT, Drive BC/AB, TRAN, emergency responders, DMOs, Visitor Centres, DBC, local and regional government, tourism operators

1. QUICK WINS

CATALYST

PROVINCIAL SCOPE

# 9. APPENDICES

## 9.1 APPENDIX 1: LIST OF COMMUNITIES AND FIRST NATIONS



MICA HELI SKIING LODGE, REVELSTOKE  
Photo: Blake Jorgenson

### The region is part of four regional districts:

- Regional District of East Kootenay
- Regional District of Central Kootenay
- Kootenay Boundary Regional District
- Columbia Shuswap Regional District

### Other communities include:

- City of Fernie (also a designated Resort Municipality receiving Resort Municipality Initiative funding)
- District of Sparwood
- District of Elkford
- City of Cranbrook
- City of Kimberley
- Village of Canal Flats
- District of Invermere (also a designated Resort Municipality receiving Resort Municipality Initiative funding)
- Village of Radium Hot Springs (also a designated Resort Municipality receiving Resort Municipality Initiative funding)
- City of Rossland (also a designated Resort Municipality receiving Resort Municipality Initiative funding)
- Village of Warfield
- Village of Fruitvale
- Village of Montrose
- Village of Salmo
- City of Trail
- City of Castlegar
- City of Nelson
- Village of Kaslo
- Town of Creston
- City of Grand Forks
- Village of Slocan
- Village of Silverton
- Village of New Denver
- Village of Nakusp
- City of Revelstoke (also a designated Resort Municipality receiving Resort Municipality Initiative funding)
- Town of Golden (also a designated Resort Municipality receiving Resort Municipality Initiative funding)

### First Nations

The Kootenay Rockies region is within the Traditional Territories of the Ktunaxa Nation, the Sinixt Nation, the Okanagan Nation and the Secwepemc (Shuswap) peoples.

## 9.2 APPENDIX 2: PROVINCIAL INITIATIVES IDENTIFIED SUPPORTING THIS STRATEGY

The following regional objectives were identified as having provincial scope for consideration in the development of the Provincial Destination Development Strategy.

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY
<p><b>1. Work collaboratively to create and communicate a code of respectful and safe conduct and a shared story (including invasive species education) for front, mid, and backcountry, to educate both residents and visitors; distribution should be both to public recreationalists, and also to visitors via operators.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research better practices in other jurisdictions and determine transferrable lessons to the Kootenay Rockies region.</li> <li>• Convene a forum of stakeholders, including tourism operators, search and rescue organizations, emergency responders, invasive species societies, Backcountry sectors, Parks Canada, ENV, FLNR, TRAN, and TAC, and review better practices.</li> <li>• Draft a code of conduct and solicit further input from stakeholders.</li> <li>• Encourage all tourism operators, clubs, and societies to share and distribute this code of conduct through their channels.</li> </ul>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p><b>3. Work collaboratively with Provincial Ministries and Indigenous groups to develop a process and a land and water management framework leading to a shared stewardship and enforcement model that recognizes the significant contribution of the tourism industry, is adequately funded, and will provide environmental protection, mitigate usage conflicts (human and wildlife), manage inter-industry uses, and provide reasonable certainty for tourism development, motorized and non-motorized use, public and commercial recreation uses, and maintenance of viewsapes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate discussions with Provincial Ministries and DBC as part of the Provincial Destination Development Strategy.</li> </ul>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p><b>4. Create a climate action task force and work together with the Province to develop an agreed approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation, to be used to educate the industry and visitors, and to share best practices.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for expressions of interest to join the task force.</li> <li>• Review of research and better practices globally.</li> <li>• Develop, and share, resources for tourism operators.</li> <li>• Feature in annual regional tourism conference workshop.</li> </ul>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p><b>5. Participate in the development of a regional sustainability charter and seek sustainable destination accreditation by an internationally recognized body.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review TOTA Biosphere program and designation.</li> <li>• Research other international accreditation programs for sustainable tourism.</li> <li>• Review options with KRT DM Committee.</li> <li>• Pilot with select tourism operators.</li> </ul>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p>

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY
<p>7. Work collaboratively to identify sustainable funding for trail development and maintenance to support efforts of local volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in discussions with Provincial Ministries and local trail groups to review potential funding sources (e.g., off-road vehicle licensing fees).</li> <li>Research better practices in other jurisdictions.</li> <li>Recommend funding mechanisms.</li> </ul>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>9. Support and promote invasive species education and eradication initiatives and include appropriate messaging in visitor communication channels.</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>11. Work with Provincial Ministries and other industries to ensure maintenance of key resource roads.</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>16. Secure resources and working together with DBC Research Services, implement a consistent methodology to measure and communicate the economic, social, cultural, and environmental value of the tourism industry in each community, and across the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify methodology that is both statistically accurate and relatively simple to implement.</li> <li>Pilot in several communities.</li> <li>Refine, and roll-out to all communities in the region.</li> </ul>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>22. Support the development of local and regional workforce housing strategies (learning from best practices of other communities and regions), including a review of potential funding sources for housing strategy implementation.</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>23. Investigate various impacts of online accommodation platforms (pros/cons) on the health and success of the tourism industry. Participate in the summarization of various approaches being adopted around the province to manage and monitor nightly rentals being offered through these platforms (e.g., VRBO, Airbnb). Engage with small property hosts to share tourism research and training.</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>24. Participate in the creation of a source of best policies and practices for consideration by local and regional governments wishing to create a supportive policy and regulatory framework for tourism businesses.</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY
<p>29. Work collaboratively to provide training and education to businesses and operators on export-readiness, and on how best to serve travellers from emerging markets as well as new Canadians (e.g., Asia/Pacific – China, South Korea, etc.).</p>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>30. Investigate possible pooled liability insurance programs for land-based and water-based activity operators, transportation/shuttle operators, and other tourism experience providers; identify sector organizations who have, or are working on, pooled liability programs (e.g., Paddle Canada, Backcountry Lodges, HeliCat Canada, Commercial Snowmobile).</p>	<p>2. LONGER TERM ACTIONS</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>
<p>37. Work collaboratively with Drive BC/AB, emergency responders, RCMP, and TRAN to align communications within, and across, provincial boundaries in order to ensure positive and “open for business” facts are promoted as well as accurate, factual, and timely information regarding incidents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage Drive BC/AB in discussions and confirm their commitment to further discussions.</li> <li>• Develop flowchart of ‘if/then’ scenarios and associated messaging for use in consistent communication.</li> <li>• Develop protocols and key contacts for unanticipated situations.</li> <li>• Pilot and implement.</li> </ul>	<p>1. QUICK WINS</p> <p>CATALYST</p> <p>PROVINCIAL SCOPE</p>

